



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



3497
37.35.10



Harvard College Library

FROM

The Author,
Alexander Winton Buchan,

4 Feb., 1888.

*Presented to the Corporation of
Harvard College, Cambridge
Mass. U.S. by the Author
Sallies (Scotland)
20th Jan^y 1888*

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

1

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

A TRILOGY.

BY

ALEXANDER WINTON BUCHAN,

AUTHOR OF

*“The Song of Rest and Minor Poems,” “Poems of Feeling,”
and “The Vision Stream ; or, Song of Man.”*

L.

London :

DIGBY AND LONG, PUBLISHERS,
18, BOUVERIE STREET, FLEET STREET, E.C.

1887.



Harvard College Library

FROM

the author,
Alexander Winton Buchan,

4 Feb., 1888.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IN attempting to present the beautiful story of "Joseph and his Brethren" in dramatic form, I have taken its natural division into three parts,—each part being a little whole in itself, but yet an essential link in the complete history. I have in the main followed closely the Scripture narrative, deviating only therefrom, for obvious reasons, in some points of comparatively small importance.

As to the dialogue, I have put the language of real every-day life into the mouths of the speakers, except when they may be supposed to be under strong emotion : then their utterances become more rapid,—broken,—figurative,—in short, more poetical. The leading personages, however, are made to express themselves generally in a somewhat higher style. I have introduced a free adaptation of the Chorus,—as ideal spectator and wise observer of all taking place in the development of the story. Something of the kind seemed to me absolutely

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN PART I.

JACOB.		
REUBEN,	}	<i>Children of Leah.</i>
SIMEON,		
LEVI,		
JUDAH,		
ISSACHAR,		
ZEBULUN,		
JOSEPH,	}	<i>Children of Rachel.</i>
BENJAMIN,		
DAN,	}	<i>Children of Bilhah.</i>
NAPHTALI,		
GAD,	}	<i>Children of Zilpah.</i>
ASHER,		
LEAH, wife of Jacob.		
ZILPAH,	}	<i>Secondary wives of Jacob.</i>
BILHAH,		
A TRAVELLER.		
A MESSENGER.		

CHORUS OF ANCIENTS.

SCENE—CANAAN.



PART I.

CHORUS.

CREATOR, Sustainer, Ruler, only God,
We worship Thee,
In fear and joy bow before Thee ;
Bring us nigh,
See us not afar off ;
Yea, bend Thine ear while we bless Thee and adore.

The universe magnifies Thee,
All being, all events praise Thee ;
Wise as Almighty—Gracious as Wise,
Thy glory is above the heavens,
In Thy name is Thy glory,
Thy name Light,
Thy name Love.

Thou art around us, over us, in us,
In Thee we live and move :
Yet thou art a God that hidest Thyself,
Clouds are about Thee,
Mortal eye cannot follow Thy steps.

Through the range of its vision
Mystery broods—conflict bewilders,
But we sink not overwhelmed ;
Despair makes us not a prey,
For the spirit of man is the breath of Thy mouth,
So we know Thee,
Trust in Thee, and are at peace.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Children of men !
Fall not from yourselves
In your God-like freedom,
Shut not the eye of faith ;
Behold and see
Glimpses of God's hand are vouchsafed,
Evil and good,
Good and evil,
Prevailing, failing—failing, prevailing,
But not escaping from control,
From accomplishing His will,
The deliverance of the just out of trouble,
The arrest of the erring,
The triumph of good !

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

Yea, the wickedness of the wicked shall be overthrown,
Sin shall be made its own destroyer,
The transgressor shall fall in the dust,
In godly sorrow fall,
That he too may arise and stand !

CHORUS.

Hallelujah, God reigneth !
His purpose remains,
He turneth the curse into a blessing,
He ever doeth good.
There is none good but One,
Even God !!

SCENE I.—In Front of the Tents.

JACOB AND HIS SONS JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN.

Jacob. Joseph, set Benjamin upon the ass
And lead it forth. It pleases him. The child
Is able now to keep his seat : art not
My little son ?

Benjamin. O yes ! a ride, a ride !

Joseph. Father, I hear. Come Benjamin, can'st spring
Up on her back ? Too much, here then, up, up ;
Take a firm hold. Now, father ! we're away,
I and our little Benjamin, away.

Benjamin. But we'll come back again.

(*They move off.*)

Jacob. My sons ! How dear
Are ye to me ! My Rachel's sons ! Oh, did
Your mother look with me upon you there !
But she is dead, and ye are given to me,
To be new-loved even with the love that sprang
Into my heart for her at Haran's well
The moment in her face mine eyes did look.
I see that face in you : her soft round voice
Ye speak with, and your ways are all of her.

If harm befall you it would doubly grieve,
For both a mother's and a father's love
Unite in me. Yea, ye are unto me
Rachel and her two sons.

(Pauses.)

Joseph excels

In graciousness and wisdom for his years,
And Benjamin bids fair to follow him.
This even his brethren see. Do they not call
Him "Joseph, wise one?"

(Pauses again.)

One must be at hand

To do my will in private things. He suits
Me well for this. So he remains at home.
And then, too, quick-stepping Benjamin would droop
If Joseph were away. Poor child, he loves
His Joseph so, and Joseph is so kind
To him, and happy to be near us both.
Besides, his brethren tease him in the field,
And behave wildly, as he hints to me,
Not from ill-feeling, but from love to them,
That I might check. This I did grieve to hear,
And have rebuked. Boisterous indeed they are,
But kindly yet withal. Would that they did
Heed my words more. But yonder come the two,
Hark to their shout ! How joyful Benjamin,
How happy Joseph ! I should thankful be.

(Waves on Bilhah.)

Bilhah (*approaches*). What are my lord's commands ?

Jacob. See to the child.

After his little ride I've word to send
By Joseph to his brethren in the field ;
Make something ready for him by the way.

Bilhah. And there they are—Joseph and Benjamin !
Joseph looks noble in his flowing dress,
And Benjamin is fairer every day.
Joseph, I should not wonder if they say
That you are growing proud. You might be so,
Your father loves you much. Come Benjamin,
You'll go with me. What would my little man
Wish to have now ?

Joseph. After a ride some food.

Benjamin. Father, we went to the hill-top and saw
The very field.

Joseph. Ay, and the reapers too.
(*Bilhah takes Benjamin with her.*)

Jacob. That's a good child.

Joseph. I might be in the field
Assisting. I would like to do my part.

Jacob. Joseph you must be by. Something is here
Still to be done, and you must be at hand,
Else with your brethren to the harvest toil
You should go down. Even now I fain would learn
How it fares with them. You will go and see,
Is it not three hours yet before high noon.

Salute them from their father. Know their will,
And what they need inquire, and bring me word,
That it may be supplied.

Joseph. How glad I am !
But shall I stay awhile among them there,
Or hasten back ? If you permitted me,
And all is well with them, I would remain
Till early eventide.

Jacob. You may remain
Till then if all is well.

(Joseph departs.)

Jacob (gazing after him) How swift of foot!
How sweetly he obeys! Love wings his steps.
I oft am sad when looking in his face,
Even while I'm thankful. Changes must take place
In mind and state as through the wilderness
Of time we go. Let me not murmur then,
Though I do grieve. Loss by some blessing left,
Or one new-given is balanced ever. Faith
And hope, wrought in the heart by God, have weight
Against the heaviest trial, or, should have.
Thy will be done! Joseph and Benjamin,
Ay, Benjamin, I have for Rachel dead,
Joy with my grief.

(*Pauses.*)

I could arise and go
To the field after him. I feel my heart
Drawn strangely to go down and see my sons

With my own eyes. What hinders I should go.
But there comes Bilhah with my little pride,
Tears in his eyes.

(They come near.)

And where has Bilhah been
With little Benjamin after he had
His cup of milk ?

Bilhah. Watching the coming flocks
Of pretty doves alighting all around.
But he saw Joseph pass, and cries to go
Along with him. Too far for little limbs.
But Joseph will come soon and take you out
On the ass again. Or maybe you and I
Will go to meet him.

Jacob. He will soon be back,
So darling be content and you shall get
A longer, faster ride, yes, Benjamin !
But, Bilhah, I do think to go myself
Down to the field and see with my own eyes
How stands the work. Just after Joseph left
I thought of this.

Benjamin. And take me with you, yes !

Jacob. Well, well, I will. Then Bilhah bid them bring
The asses and make little Benjamin
Ready to go.

Bilhah. Now Benjamin, come quick.
You did not look for this when Joseph left.

Is not your father kind? You'll see them all,
Reuben and Dan and Naphtali, and all
Singing and reaping.

Benjamin. Joseph too I'll find,
And he will lead the ass when I come back.
He makes it run so fast. If you but saw
How fast he makes it run!

*(Jacob with Benjamin on a led ass
sets out.)*

SCENE II.—The Harvest Field.

JACOB'S SONS RESTING AT NOON. THE SONS OF THE SAME
MOTHER SITTING TOGETHER.

Simeon. Joseph is fast asleep among the sheaves.

Issachar. Let him sleep on. 'Tis pity we should toil
And he should spy. No need for judges here.
But his old silly father is to blame.

Gad. I'll teach the favourite to bear stories home.

Levi. Gad, you'll forget I doubt to give the lesson.
It would be foolish in you to offend.
Be good lads rather when he condescends
To company with you, and then who needs
To fear his tongue.

Gad. Who is it fears his tongue?

Levi. I have been hearing—but ha ! what of him
That we should care ?

Simeon. That we should care, indeed !
His broidered coat will check his pride, of course,
And curb his hopes.

Gad. (*Glancing at the Sons of Leah.*) And let you rest
your eyes
From looking up.

Dan. (*Nodding to Gad.*) They need a lesson then.

Levi. A lesson need we? We look only down ;
Leah needs not to say—"Ye are my sons !"

Issachar. And some can but look up—born to look up,
And so the smile of the gay sleeper there
Must be procured—for why,—

Asher. No more ! else I
Will choke this thinking in the throat that points
Its sting at us !

Dan. Madness it is, and worse,
To wrangle ever thus.

Simeon. And let him grow (*pointing to Joseph*)
To strength to smother us.

Zebulun. That is the word,
We must be one in that.

Voices. Yes, one ! And we
Are one ! He crosses all our paths. One arm
Must bring him down. The old tyrant's shield
Will fail him soon.

Reuben. Why all this mighty stir !
He is not worthy this.

Simeon. Not worthy this !
Think, Reuben, of our mother's secret tears.
They flow from deeper grief day unto day.
Your tongue should bid us mark those bitter drops,

And tell us how to dry them ! He is not
Worth heeding in himself—'tis true— that boy,
Empty and cunning ; but his father's ear
Is worth the heeding. He possesses that.

Asher. Thou sayest it.

Levi. And he hath waiting friends,
And wherefore not ? It is in fortune's path
To company with him.

Dan. Ha ! let this cease.
Can we but talk of him ? This day, at least,
Let us forget our sore. The harvest here
Will soon be ended. Northwards then we go,
Our flocks to pasture.

(*Sings.*) O for the valleys, the plains and the hills,
The fresh winds, the wood-notes, the murmur-
ing rills,
And the life-glow the bold shepherd's bosom
that fills.

When away and away
Wheresoever he may,
With his flocks he doth stray ;
All his care !

Reuben. I'd as lief be here,
As with the flocks away.

Gad. Could Joseph tell
Why here or there you would prefer to be ?

Reuben. What mean you? Joseph tell! I think you
put
Ill in the poor lad's head.

Gad. We do! ha! ha!

Reuben. Another quarrel then!

Gad. If it is wished.

Judah. Come, come, no more! Must there be endless
strife?

Like the dry grass in summer, still your minds
Catch fire from but a glance. Are brothers near
By nature that they may the swifter seize
Each other by the throat. Think now, but lo!
Our father comes, and Benjamin with him.
Let every face be clear. Our father loves
To see us cheerful.

Simeon. And so, partial is
Unkind, unjust. But Joseph, for his years,
Is the world's wonder.

Judah. Hush!

*(Jacob with Benjamin on a led ass
comes near.)*

Jacob. The Lord you bless
From His high throne, my sons!

The sons. Amen! The Lord
Our father bless!

Naphtali.

Come Benjamin—there now!

*(Lifts Benjamin off the ass.)**Jacob.* Is Joseph with you? He was sent before.*Benjamin.* O, yonder he is lying 'mong the sheaves!*(Runs to Joseph.)**Jacob (awaking Joseph).* The heat hath made you drowsy, Joseph.*Joseph.*

Oh!

Have I been tarrying so long?

Jacob.

We came

Not seeking thee.

Benjamin.) But I was seeking thee.*Joseph.* My little traveller! and you here, too!*(Kisses Benjamin.)*

I have been sleeping, though not long, I think:

But I have had two wondrous dreams. My tongue

Refuses to be dumb.

Benjamin. Dreams, dreams! What dreams?*Joseph.* I must e'en tell, so clear and strange they were.*Dan.* Tell us them then. I have read dreams ere this.*Joseph.* Methought that you, my brethren all and I

Were binding sheaves here in the field, when lo!

My sheaf arose and stood, and yours came round

And bowed to it.

Benjamin.

All bowing down to yours!

His Brethren (after a pause, muttering). Shalt thou indeed reign over us, or shalt

Thou have dominion over us?

Jacob. Nought ! nought !
Unlikely things do most appear in dreams.

Simeon (whispering to Levi). He sees in dream what he
pursues awake.

Dan. And had you, Joseph, yet another dream ?

Joseph. Another dream. And now I thought that I
On high was mounted, and the sun and moon
And the eleven stars came round and made
Obeisance to me.

Benjamin. Up, up in the sky !

Jacob. What is this idle dream which thou has
dreamed ?
Shall I, thy mother, and thy brethren come
To bow ourselves to the earth to thee ? (*To himself*) But
stay,
I should not speak as if these dreams would e'er
Come true !

Simeon. Yea, yea, we will all bow to him ;
Wherefore not bow ?

Dan. Did we indeed all bow ?

Jacob. But idle dreams ! (*To himself.*) Strange that I
could not rest
When Joseph went, but had to follow him
With Benjamin, as if a higher hand
Compelled me, and now see these wondrous dreams !
But I must pass, or seem to pass them by.

His brethren are displeased. (*Addressing them.*) My sons,
your hands

Have not been resting much, else would the field
Not stand so filled with sheaves. The Lord accept
Your willing toil and bless! And now hear ye,
Let all that southward lies—'tis ripe—be reaped
Ere you cross to the slope to finish there.
The reaping done—winnowing and storing next.
Joseph, I sent to know your state and needs.
But ye are well, nor needing aught I see.
This would have pleased you, Joseph, to report,
Would it not, son?

Gad (whispering to Levi). You must behave yourself
When Joseph comes!

Reuben. Our father's voice we hear,
And will obey.

(*Jacob prepares to leave.*)

Naphtali. Come Benjamin, a spring,
Now, there you are. You'll be a man one day,
And bind the sheaves with us. Would you like that?

Benjamin. And Joseph will bind too.

Naphtali. Yes, Joseph too.

Jacob. Now we return. My sons! I thankful am
That ye are well and happy. Live in peace,
And stray not from our field. Reuben, your voice
Will bring my words to mind if need arise,

But need will not arise. Ye all do hear
My words, my sons. The Lord watch o'er you all
And bless you from his throne !

Voices.

Amen ! Amen !

*(Jacob, with Joseph and Benjamin,
goes away.)*

Reuben. Now to our toil.

Asher.

I would like first to hear

The wondrous dream read.

Reuben.

Never fear ! The dreams

Are safely lodged within our memories,

They'll not escape. Meanwhile 'twere best to ply

The sickle stoutly.

SCENE III.—Hebron. Leah's Dwelling.

LEAH, ZILPAH, BILHAH.

Leah. What is happening now that you look so?*Zilpah.* I am indeed troubled. I have much to bear.*Leah.* Have you and Bilhah been at words again?*Zilpah.* Do you think I say to her, "Hear me and help me with my burden!" But I have been speaking with Bilhah, and we were in sympathy, at least, for once.*Leah.* Yea, that is it. Joseph with your sons and Dan and Naphtali are much together of late, I have been noticing.*Zilpah.* Even so. Gad and Asher do not like to be contemned. They have spirit. They know what they are doing.*Leah.* Who contemns them? I have heard this before. In what are they passed by? This is a smouldering fire. Surely the second is not wronged, if the first say, "Do this!" You provoke me to speak.*Zilpah (to herself.)* Yes, yes, good mistress, I shall not forget my place for want of being reminded of it. (*To her mistress.*) I know all this, I know my own mind. But I will refrain my tongue.

Leah. Zilpah, it would be better and wiser for Gad and Asher to keep more by their own brothers. But I am forgetting, they are, no doubt, looking for some favour through Joseph. (*To herself*) Becomes it me, to wrangle with my handmaid! Yet, every day some word drops from her mouth that gives me pain; and that favoured boy is ever at the root thereof! (*To Zilpah*) Are there no household duties waiting?

Zilpah. These do ever return. But in your haste, you go astray. Joseph's companionship is not greatly set by. You'll see this, and he will soon learn it too. But here comes Bilhah.

Leah (to Bilhah). What is the cause of the trouble now, Bilhah?

Bilhah (glancing at Zilpah). Oh, these stories, I suppose, and these wondrous dreams. But why heed them? Joseph, no doubt, has his father's favour. And, after all, no wonder. Do not blaze up, Zilpah. Do you think I say this just to provoke you and your mistress?

Zilpah. No wonder! Oh, you say so! Perhaps he calls you 'mother'! But I know him perfectly, and his father too. He'll not deceive me, smooth and crafty as he is. I know when his tongue wags. Is he asleep when he dreams, can you tell me?

Leah. Joseph still! Joseph again! (*To herself*) I should not listen to their talk, perhaps.

Zilpah. Yes, Joseph ever. He is the centre figure, the distinguished son. Does my mistress not know that!

Leah. Oh, do not torture me!

Zilpah. Nay, I must speak. To whom will Jacob give the double portion. I have a guess.

Leah. To which of his sons? Talk not thus before me. I like not evil-guessing, evil-suggesting.

Zilpah. Well! well! Just be blind. Yet new things come to pass. How does Jacob act towards you, the old hard-hearted—but I offend, I fear—and Joseph has cunning taking ways; you say this yourself. Should these not bear fruit? A *young judge*, (Joseph wears the long-sleeved coat already) an old *ruler*!

Leah. Hush! hush! I tremble. Oh, do not let Reuben know what you hint at! Bilhah, you'll not speak.

Bilhah. Zilpah excels in hinting.

Zilpah. Indeed! I speak plainly, and not behind backs. Reuben know it! Not by me. But he learns much from a certain individual in secret, when they are alone!

Bilhah. What now! an undermeaning in your words! (*To herself*) I must let this pass. (*To Zilpah*) Reuben learns more from you than from me. Why are you all afraid? Who mean no ill fear no ill. But, see! there goes Joseph, and little Benjamin with him! No wonder his father loves him!

Zilpah. Him! the double-faced! If he brings home

tales it will be the worse for him. His brethren have their eyes on him. They'll not be kept in the dark by me.

Leah. Cease! cease! Counsel your sons, Bilhah. Good counsel is a star in the night. But I know not what to say. (*To herself*) Joseph is set too high. He is the canker-worm in the fig tree. Oh! I am sorely tried.

Zilpah. I counsel my sons. But Bilhah shares in the favour shown to Joseph.

Bilhah. And Zilpah looks expectingly to her mistress!

Zilpah. Who is chief here? Bilhah knows that.

Bilhah. Dan and Naphtali have their portion in *Jacob*!

Zilpah. Tell Reuben that when he returns.

Bilhah. Vile tongue! I have something to say to you, and I shall say it, but not now. Pooh! I should be elsewhere.

(*Darts off.*)

Zilpah. Yes, go. There, she has met the two. How pleasant he looks. And mark her! And yonder the old man watching the three! Oh, I could tear that coat in pieces!

Leah. Oh, leave me, Zilpah, and let my mind settle, if that may be. My strength fails, and my troubles increase.

Zilpah. I would not vex my mistress, but I cannot shut my eyes.

Leah. True, true! but leave me now.

Zilpah (to herself going). Thou needest peace. Vexation wears down flesh and spirit too. Doth Jacob not see that in Leah's face I fear to name or think of? When Rachel lived, her wish was everything, but matters now are worse. They could endure her rule with some small patience, but to see this boy placed uppermost—it is too much for mine, at least, to bear.

(Zilpah leaves.)

Leah (alone). Oh, hard hath been my lot! Six sons
and one
Fair daughter have I born, alas! for her
And her young grief, to Jacob, and of all
His house the eldest these, and yet he is
Of me neglectful, and to them unjust.
I cannot close mine eyes. It is not I
That only feign sad pictures in my heart.
Would it were so. If on myself alone
His coldness fell I would in silence bear.
But they too suffer. Woe, this cruel day!

(Pauses.)

Why ever call to mind, paining myself
In needlessness, perhaps, that Jacob took
Rachel, not me, in soul and in belief,
First to his bed? 'Tis custom everywhere
The eldest should be given for wife before
The younger to the man, husband to both.
'Tis even so. Then let this satisfy.
Nay, let all things around me, even my lord

And his strange ways, gleam in the sunshine of
Heart's ease and wear a smile !

(Pauses.)

Thou wilt be just,
Jacob ! as God Thy Fear is, whom thou serv'st,
Be just.

(Pauses.)

But, ah, who looks to justice must
Be armed and wakeful, while upon the couch
Of love one sleeps, nor even dreams of wrong.
Rachel alive that couch possessed, and dead
She doubly holds it, so my head must lie
On the cold stone of justice for a pillow ;
But no, I will not sleep. Need they be blind,
My sons, when I do see. Nay, that they see
Clearly, and how to walk, too, in the night,
Shall be my care. Peace hath forsaken our tent !
Let it return on righteous wings, or fly
Still farther off !

CHORUS.

The heart united in its love hath peace,
It beats in the fulness of true life,
And the beloved sleeps in the arms of trust,

Dreading not the troubler's approach—
The noiseless step of the thief.
Oh, the preciousness of love in the eyes of God,
His blessing descends on it ;
The dew thereof makes the blade
Of its beauty ever green.
Where, O, where shall it be found,
This flower of Paradise—where—where ?

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

In the home of the wedded pair,
Who are one indeed,
A glimpse of it may be caught :
It nestles there for a little
On the way to its home on high.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

But, ah ! what have we here,
Divided love, squandered affection,
Conflicting interests, settled war,
Envy, jealousy, hate,
In one tent abiding,

At one table feeding,
By one hope roused.
By one fear shaken,
And but one prize to win !

CHORUS.

As the fruit is in the leaf,
The effect in the cause,
That tabernacle shall be smitten,
Distress shall enter,
And the voice of lamentation be heard therein.
Come away ! come away !
Ere desolation overtake.
Ere the crowning evil follow,
Let us trembling stand aside ;
It may not tarry
What if it is even now at the door ?

SCENE IV.—Hebron.

JACOB AT THE DOOR OF HIS HOUSE ; JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN
AT A LITTLE DISTANCE.

Jacob (to himself) 'Tis many days since I have heard
of them.

When northwards with the flocks they go, I fear
The most. Why send they not, as they were told,
Word of their movements? They do surely lead
The flocks as I desired. I said, keep ye
Well west in Shechem. I am still afraid
That Simeon and Levi, furious yet
At Dinah's wrong, may into peril rush.

(Pauses.)

Joseph I will at once despatch to see
How things are now. If they were all like him
The Shechemite had never hated so,
And we our herds had yet been leading forth,
Unarmed as did we, when I Jordan crossed,
Leaving the place of booths. Joseph will be
A staff to me. These dreams were sent of God,
But it had better been they had not heard
Of them. They may not bear to think of him
Exalted so. But they will soon forget ;

And Joseph must not speak of dreams again.
To check vain thoughts in him I will say nought,
But I'll forget or seemingly forget.

(Pauses.)

There Joseph comes. He is a sightly youth,
His mother's hair, his mother's face and eyes,
Her voice, her ways!

(Joseph draws near.)

Joseph, they have not yet
Sent messenger to me.

Joseph. I had in mind
Even as I came to speak to thee of this.
Send me at once. I will set out forthwith,
And, God o'erwatching me, see how they fare,
And bring thee word. I should have spoken ere this.

Jacob. Well, thou shalt go. Westward in Shechem
thou
Shouldst find them. 'Tis the way they must have gone.
Bilhah will fill thy scrip. The Lord thee lead!
Tell little Benjamin who loves thee so
Thou'lt soon be back. Poor little dear he pines
When thou'lt away.

Joseph. Thy words I gladly hear,
I'll see them soon.

Jacob. Then go from me in peace,
And give to them the token of my love,

My blessing and my prayer.

(Benjamin comes running forward.)

Joseph. O, thou hast been
Far, far away. What trophies thou hast brought,
Berries and flowers !

Benjamin. See, see, and more and more.
Father, let Joseph come. I know the place,
I'll take him there. Yes, Joseph, come away.
Just come away !

Joseph. Not now, dear Benjamin,
But some day soon, for I must go away
And see our brethren and the flocks, and bring
Word how they are. This, father wishes me
To do. But I will soon be back, and then
I'll take you on the ass a longer ride
Than yesterday you had.

Jacob. Now do not cry,
Dear Benjamin. I'll go with you myself
To places, and when Joseph comes again
We'll tell him all the wonders we have seen.
That's a good child.

Joseph. Yes, I will soon be back,
But you must come and meet me on your ass
And father with you. Will you meet me then ?
O 'twill be nice !

(Bilhah draws near.)

Benjamin. But if you do not come,
Never come back !

Jacob. What puts such silly thoughts
In the child's head. Joseph will soon be back
No fear of that.

Bilhah. Let me wipe off these tears
From pretty cheeks. Joseph will soon be back,
Yes, Benjamin.

(Bilhah withdraws.)

Jacob. Few days thou'lt be away,
But be they ne'er so few they'll many be
To me my son, so thou wilt speed thy step.
Speak meekly to thy brethren. Say to them,
They must not onward go and not make known
For long their movements. How it is with them,
With each, with all, ask thou. See where they are
And when they'll homeward turn. And on thy way
To them mark how the pasture looks, for they
Will wish to know.

Joseph. All that thou say'st I hear
And will obey. I long to see them all.
What for my brethren's sake would I not do ?
Now I depart. A kiss, dear Benjamin.
I'll soon be back.

*(Joseph provided with staff and scrip
departs.)*

Jacob (gazing after him). God watch o'er thee my son,

My Joseph ! Benjamin come close to me,
Thou, too, art very dear.

(*Pauses.*)

(*Benjamin falls asleep.*) Poor little thing
His rambling and his tears have overpowered
Him quite. How sound he sleeps ! His joy and grief
Have joined to give him this. So everything
In this strange life works to the final good,
Oblivion of sorrow, peaceful rest.

(*Pauses.*)

Joseph is gone. He'll soon be on their track,
A second sunset should give up their tents.
Oh, how this hour brings back the time and scene
When I with conscience burdened and pursued
With fears fled from Beërsheba to find
My way to Haran ; when upon the field
Of Luz, benighted I lay down and slept,
Stones for my pillow, and in vision saw
The ladder God let down from heaven to earth,
Angels upon it, while above it stood
The Lord who blessed me and my seed, and in
Me and my seed all families of mankind.

(*Pauses.*)

The Lord hath blessed me ! Oh, how have I been
Led and delivered ! Laban's treacherous hands
Restrained and forced to let me go in peace,
Esau's too just and natural vengeance turned
To tenderness and joy to see my face

Again, and that I had been prospered so.
My Rachel hath indeed been taken from me,
My best-belovèd, but her children, dear
Joseph and Benjamin, are by my side,
To be for her to me as I to them
Am for us both. As in the past, oh, God,
Thou hast protected me, Thou wilt watch o'er
Me still. In faith I give myself and mine
Into Thy care. Yea, hast Thou not disclosed
The future in those dreams to Joseph sent ?
Is he to sit on high ? In what way sit ?
It yet appears not, but he doubtless will
Exalted be. The word of God is sure.
The certainty of good laid up for him
Makes me forget his absence. I should be
Cheerful indeed.

*(Bilhah comes forward and takes
Benjamin away.)*

*SCENE V.—The Open Country in the Neighbourhood of the
City of Shechem.*

JOSEPH ASTRAY.

Joseph. Shechem from yonder rising ground I saw
Sleeping between the hills. The vapoury veil
Of morning gently lifted up revealed
Its olive groves and glades by song-birds soothed
To sweet forgetfulness of care beside
The crystal fountains. Oh, I heard those notes
Under the branches, with my mother near,
In days gone by. 'Twas the old sounds I heard
As distant Shechem I beheld, not those
That load the breeze to day.

(Pauses.)

My heart I fear
Will draw me from my path, nay, from myself.
Past love and present must not now contend,
Save in the effort that shall quicken my steps
Until I find them. But the tear will start
Into my eyes when "mother" moves my lips.

(Looks round.)

They are not here. Will they have westward turned

To Sharon's plain, or northward gone? No trace
Of them can I perceive. 'Tis strange! No ill
Has happened to them, I trust. Fierce eyes I know
Look on them here, and but small cause they need
To lift the hand. How shall I go? Behold,
A traveller comes this way. Haply he may
Direct my steps.

(Traveller approaches.)

Joseph (addressing traveller). God bless thee! traveller.

Traveller. The Lord thee bless!

Joseph. Have shepherds from the south
From Hebron with their flocks been here of late?

Traveller. Such with their flocks were here some days
agone,
But stayed not long.

Joseph. And dost thou know where now
They feed their flocks?

Traveller. I heard them say, "Behold,
To Dothan now, pasture aboundeth there."

Joseph. To Dothan, and how thither lies the way?

Traveller. Behind and to the left keep thou the sun,
And in four hours thou should'st descry their tents.

Joseph. My thanks to thee! God guide thee in thy
way!

(They part.)

How light the step when in love's path we go!
I'll find them now.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Why, ye flock-tending sons of Jacob,
Are your eyes evil that your father is good,
Ye are not 'minished that Joseph is so beloved,
 He is worthy and ye feel it.
At the edge of his mother's grave too
 Doth not his father see him standing ?
True ! Joseph loves not wicked ways,
 But his brethren he loves ;
Nay, the measure of his hatred of these
 Is the compass of his love for you.
 The son of his father's old age,
Obedient, tender, simple, motherless,
 Wonder not that he is marked
By a token that courts admiring eyes.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

Ah ! but favour extreme shown to one
Among equals who yet stand apart,
Awakeneth, say ye, if naturally,
 The demons—jealousy, envy, hate—
In the breast of these passed by.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Ye sons of the same father !

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

But not of the same mother,—
Lurketh not a root of bitterness there ?

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Brethren, (are ye not ?)
Calmly consider,
Be not speciously blinded,
Ye are kindly tried by your God,
If so be that your selfishness give way,
That meekness rule in your heart,
That your father's voice be heard,
His doings be wholly trusted,
And the son so doatingly looked on,
But no, not to your hurt,
Be gladly received,
Sent and coming to you in love.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

His dreams ! What of them ?

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

If prophetic, ye know whence they come.
Yet dreams are but air till fulfilled,
The future is God's.
Again hear us ! Turn ye, turn ye !
Even yet while envy is not enthroned,
And the hand of its offspring hate
Is not clenched for the murder stroke.
A little farther in the way
And the passion storm will burst,
Then hellward ye shall be carried
Like straws on the breast of a boiling flood.

SCENE VI.—The Open Country near Dothan.

JOSEPH'S BRETHREN CONVENED.

Judah. I think it wrong to move so far nor let
Our father know.

Levi. We move when pasture fails.

Zebulun. So doth our father know where we must be.
We're with the flocks, and that the flocks be fed
We guide our steps.

Asher. And Joseph is at home
Good company to our father.

Gad. He may come,
No need for us to send.

Simeon. Joseph may come!
He'll better be at home.

Issachar. Yea, better there.
Yet I would have him here.

Reuben. His father's voice
Joseph with joy obeys.

Simeon. Loseth he aught
By his obedience? Let him not come here.
'Twere dangerous. My mother in her grief
Starts ever up before me when I see
The favourite's face.

Reuben. Speak not of Leah now,
All but her usage I could calmly bear.
Yet, is the boy to blame?

(Judah waves Reuben aside.)

Simeon (whispering to Levi). Levi, thou hear'st.

Levi. Too well I hear; but what is it to hear
If ne'er to do?

Dan. To-morrow we turn south.

Issachar. The favourite will not need to come so far!

(Joseph comes in sight.)

Voices. Ah, look! The dreamer cometh!

Simeon. What think ye,
Is he not given into our hands?

Levi. Come now
And further the fulfilment of his dreams,
We'll bow to him in truth.

Issachar. Over him bow,
The covenant is firm.

Voices. And shall be kept.
We'll kill him.

Issachar. Lo! Reuben and Judah come.

Simeon. Rise up at once! *(Seizes Joseph by the throat.)*
Sneaker! what brings you here?

Joseph (gasping). Our father sent. Why look you so?
Oh, why
Thus fly on me?

(Reuben and Judah rush forward.)

Reuben. Hold, brethren, hold ! Let go,
I should be heard !

Judah. Let Reuben speak ! 'Tis right
That he should speak !

Joseph. Oh, what—what have I done ?
I love you all. I've come to you in love !
My father's prayer and blessing to you all
I bring, my brothers.

Judah. Come aside, I say,
Leave Joseph there. No fear of his escape.
Reuben must sure be heard.

(They go aside.)

Voices. Let him then speak.

Reuben. Let us not kill him.

Voices. We have heard enough,
Back, back, and smite the favourite where he lies.

Reuben. Will ye not hear me ? Shed no blood to-day.
But we of him may rid ourselves—nay, shall,
And not upon our heads his murder lie.
He is our father's son,—

(They show great impatience.)

We hate him, true,
Yet, wherefore ? Nay, if even he wrong hath done
To us, refrain and lay no hands on him.
Your brother, young, confiding, bringing you
Message of peace and love, to shed his blood—

Deed horrible and vile! The wrath of God
Flames out on murder. Think of Cain, his curse—

Simeon. Pooh! we have heard enough!

Voices.

Come to the deed!

Judah (holding them back). Nay; but let Reuben speak!

Ye shall not go.

The eldest—ye will surely hear his word.

Reuben. Rid ourselves of him, but not shed his blood,
The life is in the blood, sacred to God,
Blood to the heavens for vengeance cries, is heard
Ever therein. And then our father's heart,
Through sorrow for his son with feeble power,
And daily feebler the life-stream impelling
Till death stepped in, will join that vengeance cry,
Rousing the arm of God to hurl his wrath
Unmeasured on us—wrath we could not scorn,
Albeit, we might defy.

Issachar.

These words are lost,

Idle time-wasting. Let us smite at once
Nor heed what follows. Wages doubly-earned
His dreams and lying tales. No more!

Asher.

Yet say

How would he rid us of him?

Zebulun.

If not—then

He dies—for we have sworn.

Reuben (aside).

That piteous cry!

(*Answering.*) How rid? Into that pit the dreamer cast,

There leave him. But his blood must not be shed ;
To-morrow southwards we do lead the flocks,
Pasture that way abounds.

Judah. Into that well
Simeon will cast the boy.

Simeon. Tear from his back
That coat ! What pit ? Only if deep enough
To hold him there, shall he go living down.

Voices. Into the pit with him !

Simeon. Stand back and I——

Voices. Let Reuben cast him in—the eldest—he should.

Simeon.—We all do cast him in, my hand for all !
*(Joseph is bound by Simeon and
thrown into the pit.)*

Joseph. Oh, do not murder me ! What, what do ye ?
What have I done ? My father sent me here.
I gladly went, oh, gladly ! Help me God !
My brethren murder me ! Oh, God ! Oh, God !

Gad. Heed not his cries ! *(looking into the pit.)*
Thou'lt carry tales no more !

Levi. The double portion—he will find it there
Before the time. But come——

Reuben (aside). Deliver him !
Let him not perish ! Save him ! Oh, my God !

Judah (aside). Oh, that poor Joseph had not come to us !

Reuben. Now let us to a distance go. His cries
We do not wish to hear. Come, come away !

Zebulun. Over that rising ground then, quick, lead on.
We should have eaten by this.

Voices. Mealtime ! mealtime !

Levi. The coat, the coat ! We'll have a use for it.

Dan. Give him the coat.

Naphtali. Levi would wear the coat.

Simeon. I have the garment. It will keep my love
Warm for the wearer.

(They sit down to eat.)

Levi. Reuben is not here.

Asher. He eastward went but now.

Issachar. He stayed our hands
From making a true finish of our work.

Simeon. The pit secures him.

Zebulun. We have eaten our meal
With a good relish.

Issachar. We were made to wait,
Good appetite gives relish to the food.

Levi. We earned a hearty meal !

Gad. Behold, behold !
Camels and men, a merchant train approach !

(A caravan of Ishmaelitic Merchants approaches.)

Judah (aside). A means of saving him! That he die there,

Oh, fearful, fearful ! As a voice from God
The thought comes to me !

(Addressing them.) Brethren, what think ye?

Joseph would be a prize for these indeed.
Shall we not sell him ? We shall rid us so
Of him alive or dead.

Dan.

Thou sayest it !

Issachar. Up with him then. He'll perish in their hands.

The merchants will give gold, that is the word.

Voices. Good, good! we must have gold. They'll give us gold.

**What is the snake to us, yet they shall weigh
Gold pieces for him. Let him die with them,
Quick, up with him !**

(Joseph is taken up, the Merchants draw near.)

Judah (to the Merchants). God prosper you and bring you home in peace !

A little tarry. We would speak with you.

An Ishmaelite. Upon our way—we wish you shepherds
peace,

But may not linger. We to Egypt go.
What would you with us?

Judah. Say what carry ye ?

Merchant. Too much to tell,—spices and balm, and myrrh.

Issachar. The air reveals it. Ye are rich indeed !

Judah. Slaves have ye too ?

Merchant. Slaves too. And have ye such
To sell ? (*glancing at Joseph*).

Simeon. Such have we. Look ! What do ye say ?
(*Joseph is pushed forward. Merchants whisper.*)

Merchants (aside). A male and young, well favoured in
his looks !

Joseph. Oh, God ! oh, father ! Brothers, what is this ?
(*To the Merchants.*) These are my brethren, and my
father sent

Me far off to them with his word. . . .

Levi. Heed not
His cries. He hath been spoiled at home. But say,
Young, fair faced, strong, with high thoughts in his head,
What will ye give ?

Simeon. What give ?

Merchants. This cloth exchange.
Broidered and tasseled—see !

Simeon. A finer here
We have already.

(*Holding up Joseph's coat.*)

Joseph. Oh, my father's gift
Of love to me!

Issachar. Of love! You stole his heart,
With lying tales and dreams. You'll find the truth!

Merchants. Of frankincense and myrrh would you
prefer?

Voices. Gold, gold in weight. How many pieces?
Say!

Merchants (after consulting). Twenty of silver will we
give—no more.

Say but the word, 'tis done. If not, we go,
We may not longer stay.

Issachnr. Give thirty, and——

Merchants. Twenty we'll give.

Judah. Then weigh the pieces straight.
(*Joseph is sold, and dragged away.*)

Issachar. He'll trouble us no more—dead and not
killed.

Good, good! for how should he endure the yoke
And not succumb! Sink or not sink, he's gone.
Now let us share alike.

Dan. And Reuben too,
Reuben was not at this.

Voices. Yes, he must share.

Judah. Yes, share. Even as we speak there Reuben
comes,
In grief. The pit he empty finds.

Simeon.

We'll hide

The truth awhile to let the Ishmaelite
Get farther on his way.

Reuben.

What have ye done?

The pit I empty found. Ye have not——no——
Ye have not murdered him. He is not slain.
Where have ye hidden him? Tender in years,
We should have shielded him, not sought his life.
Unwise was I to go. To me he looked
The eldest for defence. Is he alive?
Tell me at once. His father! This o'ertops
Thy sorrows all! But, say, he is not dead.
Simeon, Levi, do not turn away.
Here of his love, obedient to the care
And word of our old father did he come,
Is it not so? Judah, why speak'st thou not?

Issachar. Can'st thou not guess?

Reuben (looking into their faces). Ah, guilty then! Foul,
foul!

To slay our brother, deeply injuring us,
Were thrice-dyed sin. But only young and vain
And crafty be it, and the favourite too
Of his old father—favour weakly shown—
This for a plea! No ground for murder is
In God's pure law. From under you will slip
Your blood-cursed footing, and ye'll sink each one,
Nor ever stand again. God's hand holds down.
(*They look significantly at each other.*)

But from your looks, he is not slain. Escaped ?
Simeon, thou know'st.

Simeon. Dost answer thee to say
I know it, and thou say'st.

Reuben. Dost mock me too ?
I turn from thee.

Simeon. Reuben, thou'dst better curb
Thy tongue.

Levi. Or bid us cast him in the pit,
To die of hunger there. Were Joseph there
Reuben would hold his peace. Whom does he rage
Against ? Himself or us ? Himself in chief,
If that he be a judge arraigning justly.
We took your counsel.

Asher (in a low voice). I could think to say
We've Joseph slain.

Judah (in anger). Say not the cruel word—
False word ! (*To Reuben.*) He lives for any of us.
He is away——

Zebulun. Egypt will give him rest.

Issachar. Among her dead.

Judah. Reuben, we sold the lad
To Merchants passing down. 'Twas better this.
Among the buried dead he is to us,
And yet he lives. He is not here to rouse

Fury in any arm to smite as Cain
Murdered his brother.

Reuben. Then the poor boy lives !

I am content. A slave indeed, but lives,
And on our hands is not our brother's blood.

(*Aside.*) Joseph, thy sky is cruelly o'ercast,
Cruelly suddenly ! Thou cam'st to us
In love, with love, and thy own flesh and blood
To murder thee in heart, and take thy price,
A slave's, from passing traders !

(*Aloud.*) What last words

Spake he ?

Gad. In make-believe he sighed and said,
" Oh, God forgive them ! " then he was as dumb,
Nor ope'd his mouth again.

Levi. And wept forsooth.

Simeon. Come, come to work. Let us a word prepare.
For all, for each of us, that will be truth
Unto our father's ears.

Levi. We will not say
He peradventure has been carried off
By merchants passing down to Egypt, else
He will be sought and found.

Dan. No, no, he's dead,
By robbers slain.

Simeon. Nay, rather by wild beast,
Lion or leopard, torn, devoured, and here

His coat of colours rent in pieces—so—
And dipped in blood will prove our words——

Voices. Are, true !

Judah. I am content.

Reuben. The thing is good. (*Aside.*) I must
Agree in this. Guilty with them I am.
Into the pit I cast him. 'Twas my word
That flung him there to perish !

(*Aloud.*) Are we one
In this then ?

All. Yea !

Reuben. If so, why tarry here ?

SCENE VII.—Hebron.

JACOB WITH BENJAMIN ON A KNOLL NEAR THE HOUSE.

BILHAH CLOSE BY.

Benjamin. Joseph was soon to come to me. How long
He stays away. Why does he stay so long?
I think he'll never come. Father, you look,
Oh, do you see him coming?

Jacob. No, my son,
But he will soon be now. Will Joseph not
Be soon back, Bilhah?

Bilhah. Oh, yes, very soon,
To-day—I'm sure. You'll find, dear Benjamin,
That I have read your dream aright. But come
Down to the dove-cot. We must not forget
Your pretty pets.

Jacob. Yes, go, my little son,
And I will call when Joseph comes in sight.

CHORUS.

Shineth the sun upon thee O man,
Then rejoice, rejoice,

And let not thy thanks be of the lip only.
But in the blaze of thy prosperity
Forget not the cloud that bringeth down the heat.
For why,
Thou art tabernacling in the wilderness
And the arms of thy desire oft clasp a lie
On which to pillow thy head,
Therefore it is
Sudden darkness comes upon thee
Yet faint not in that gloom,
The darkness of it is the light of truth.
(O the watchful care of the love of Heaven !)

Jacob ! Jacob !
Flee to the sheltering Rock !
Even now
A black spot is appearing in the sky,
The tempest is behind it,—the tempest is in it,
Alas ! alas ! for thee,
The pulse of thine heart—the light of thine eyes
Is stilled—is quenched.
Thy habitation of branches is swept away
Piteous will be thy cry forthwith
In the midst of the plain of thy desolation !

Jacob (alone). Joseph must hasten home. I know his way ;
He is so wise and kind and mindful too
Of all I say. His brethren sometimes look
With envy when they see how all do love

His gentleness and his bright face admire.
Ah but they love him too. They bring him back
For they will now be southwards pasturing
Not willing that he should return alone,
And he I know loves to be with the flocks.
But yet I rather would that he did come
Before them home, as they must slowly move.

(*Pauses.*)

My heart is sore for little Benjamin,
He fails to eat his food and soundly sleep.
Last night he, dreaming, cried in Bilhah's ear :
"Take me along with him ! I cannot live
If Joseph goes from me—is taken away !"
Poor little thing, how happy he will be
When Joseph comes again !

Bilhah (enters in haste). Behold ! even now
A messenger with instant word for thee !

Jacob. Who—what ?

Messenger. Sent straight from thine own sons,—I come !

Jacob. What word bring'st thou to me ? Joseph should
be——

Messenger. Thy sons are two days off. They send by me,
Not knowing how to come themselves, this robe
All torn and bloody. In the open field,
They found it.

Jacob. Joseph's coat ! Oh fearful sight.
Joseph is not with them ?

Messenger.

I saw him not.

Jacob. Oh is my dear son killed? What did they say?

Messenger. In their alarm and grief they gave no word
But, "To our father Jacob this present,
And say—this have we found—know now if this
Be thy son's coat or no!"

Jacob.

They know it too!

'Tis his! 'tis his! my darling Joseph's coat.

My Rachel's child by robbers slain,—or torn

By some wild beast,—devoured—this stroke . . .

(*Faints.*)

Bilhah.

Oh, woe!

It is too true!

Zilpah (rushing in). Yonder they come!

Bilhah.

Help! help!

Benjamin. Oh, father, speak to me! I am afraid.
That man! that man!

(*Glancing at the messenger.*)

Jacob (reviving). Haste, bring my sons to me!

Benjamin.

Oh, father, speak!

Bilhah. No, no,—they'll not take you,—they'll not take
you.

Come close to me.

Benjamin.

Joseph,—bring Joseph back,

Zilpah (re-enters). They will be here even now. Reuben t
'tis he—

My lord, thy sons are here.

Jacob. My son—my son
Joseph—my son—my son!

(His sons enter.)

Oh, ye are there!

Good sons—good all! He came! Where found ye it?
Joseph—he came to you. Did he not come
To you, my sons?

Simeon. Then he was sent to us.
Alas! alas! this must be Joseph's coat.
This did we find,—of Joseph not one trace.
What has befallen him we fear to think.

Judah. We fear to tell our fear. Reuben, thy mouth
Must

Jacob. Oh, my sons, no need. An evil beast
Hath torn—devoured—my darling boy. I know
Ye know it all. Your bleeding hearts restrain
Your tongues. Speak not! Joseph is slain—devoured.
Oh God that this should ever come to pass!
Joseph is dead. So must his dreams be read.
We bow—all bow! Who could have seen it thus?
Oh, I was blind!

Levi. Alas! thou sayest it.
An evil beast hath doubtless Joseph slain!

Benjamin. You should have killed the beast. Run to
his cry—
Joseph would cry

Jacob. Come to me, Benjamin.
My Joseph now and Benjamin thou art.
My good, kind sons—take ye this little one
For Benjamin and Joseph whom you loved
So dearly, but have lost. My days are few,
This blow assures it. Joseph beckons me.
To—thee ! beloved—for thy mother's sake,
And for thy youth—thy wisdom—beauty—grace,
Affection, meekness, faithfulness, I go—
I come to thee—thou'lt not return to me,
Beyond the grave we'll meet.

CHORUS.

Bereaved Heart,
Flow out towards God,
Thy sorrow is too deep for our line to reach
We are confounded with thee.
He alone can soothe, can comfort.
Rush into His arms, seek thy treasure there,
Then, happy thou !
But ye blood-guilty men,
True brood of the Liar,

Shrink not from the cup of trembling,
Mingled, ready, full,
Reflection, horror, self-condemnation, remorse.
Our eyes are averse from you
Till in the dust ye fall
Repenting unto life.
Bow down ye shall,
For God the Holy and the Merciful
Ruleth over all !

PART II.
THROUGH PRISON TO PALACE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN PART II.

PHARAOH, *King of Egypt.*

POTIPHAR, *Captain of the Guard.*

CHIEF PHYSICIAN.

KING'S CUP-BEARER.

MAGICIANS AND WISE MEN.

CHAMBERLAIN.

JOSEPH.

KEEPER OF THE STATE PRISON.

WARDERS & OTHER OFFICIALS.

CITIZENS IN THE STREETS.

ZULEEKHA, *wife of Potiphar.*

BELKIS.

IRAS.

AND OTHER LADIES.

CHORUS OF ANCIENTS.

SCENE—EGYPT.

CHORUS.

Let us softly enter !
This is the princely dwelling of Potiphar,
Captain of the Guard
Of Pharaoh, King of Egypt.
What,—if Joseph is here,
Bought in the market of the trading Ishmaelites !
Poor Joseph,
Sent by his father in love,
Who came to his brethren,
Was rejected of them,
Stripped of his coat of colours,
Slain in their deadly purpose,
Sold into slavery,
And now is as one free among the dead.

Hark !
It is of Joseph these are speaking,
That stately man on whose high brow
The touch of an early old age is seen,
And that lady
Whose spring-time of life and beauty
Is budding to the summer-warmth.
Gently ! gently !
That we may hear all !

*SCENE II.—An Apartment in Potiphar's House.**ZULEEKHA, alone.*

Zuleekha. Egypt is light weighed with the Hebrew slave.
Love swallows everything. But what is all
Its heart unsatisfied—its wish unfed
With full possession—nothing, torment, fire.
—A prince's daughter! wife of Potiphar!
Away, away with this—but chains and bars
Golden indeed,—so hated all the more
To hold me back. I'll break them,—I'll be free!
Life hath no truth in it if love be mocked.
Shall mine be false? 'Tis false—as now it flows.
Love is not life if it unfreely reign.
Love seeks not liberty—'tis liberty!
Ah I shall press thee to my heart, sweet youth,
Shall crush thee in my arms,—shall make thee—joy
And bliss and very heaven in my embrace.
—What hear I in my soul even now,—what voice?
—“The dream of all thy life, Zuleekha, stands
In flesh and blood near thee,—within thy grasp,—
Desire-begetting manliness of form—
Rose-lilied skin,—love-melting eye,—and voice
Rolling within its curb of gentle pitch

All music's wealth ;—thy slave to bow to thee,
Thine own to claim,—not claim,—to seize—enjoy.”
——But I will claim—will seek. For love is fed
With wooing and with winning,—being wooed
And being won,—but giving all the while
Even for its life's sake, all its life and more.
——Sweet Hebrew youth, thou must be ever nigh
To catch the flame. Enkindled, there shall rise
A double cloud of love, so dense,—’twill blind
Thee, Isis—on thy throne. Goddess! me teach
Love's lesson better—deeper yet,—and learn
That I may quickly teach. Slow roll the hours!
An hour a lifetime is! Come, come! This couch
Is soft,—but hard, uneasy, till my arms
Enclose him mine!

SCENE III.—Another Apartment in Potiphar's House.

JOSEPH, *alone.*

Joseph. As a night-dream the whole appears. Even
yet

Am I indeed awake ? Here, here, alone
In this strange place. Had I not brothers once
Eleven, and one of them my mother's son ?
A father had I not who overloved
Me and that one full brother ;—yet am here.
True, true, too true ! I am indeed awake,
Only am stunned—am reeling with the blow.

My father, Benjamin, I see you not—
I, dead to you. Oh cruel were the hands
My brothers' that were laid on me that day.
Hands murderous—too horrible to think—
And my own flesh and blood. No thought of wrong
To one of you e'er nestled in my breast,
Yet to be bound—into a deep pit cast
Like a dead dog—only the mercy shown
Of selling me a slave to passing men.
How, why, what did it mean—whence did it spring,
That violence,—that hate ?

(Pauses, in tears.)

I should not brood

Thus evermore upon that fearful scene,
But shall I ever cease? My heart still turns
To thee, my father dear,—thee, Benjamin
My brother, and the hour I wiped thy tears
And said I would be quickly back again
Bringing thee strange nice things from far away,—
And turns to you, my brethren, grieving most
That you should hate me and upon yourselves
Draw judgment, wronging me, who ye most know
Long, long ere this, deserved not ill but good,
Good only at your hands. If now you say,—
(And doubtless you do say,—seeing me not
Nor knowing if I live,—and in your gaze
If yet he is alive, my father dear,
Mourning and wondering why I came not back,)
“Oh we did cruelly, did wickedly
That day we slew our brother in our hearts
And sold him to the passing Ishmaelite!”
All I forgive, and pray God to forgive
And sanctify to genuine penitence
Your dark reflections and your self-reproach.
Oh be ye kind, obedient, helpful, near
To my poor father and to Benjamin—
Now in himself—himself and me—so loved
More even than I. Oh do not envy him
His father’s heart, but your repentance show
For wrongs on me, in loving, guarding him
Sole branch of Rachel left. *(Pauses, greatly moved.)*

Oh, ever back
To Hebron goes my heart 'mid all the press
Of Potiphar's affairs,—his servants' work
And faithfulness,—the produce of his fields
Summing and storing,—with the household round
Of special duties, by my mistress' word
Devolved on me. Why am I here? Oh God,
Do I rebel thus asking? I would not
Rebel, but would Thy hand even gladly bear
Though darkly thus it lies on me, for all
Thy ways are just and true—leading in fine
To glory to Thy name. Forbid that I
Should fear—Thou leading me. That I forget
Wholly myself—prompt Thou the inward thought
To choose my way and by Thy providence
Keep me wherein Thou wouldest have me go.
—It is from Thee,—I feel it,—that I take
No means to escape or send the tidings home
Of my condition. I am dumb from Thee.
Yet in my heart—home, home, is echoing
By night and day. The voice of nature this,
And Thou'lt forgive.

(Pauses.)

To be in quiet thus
How grateful! Now I can bethink myself.
My master and the household are gone forth,
Only at home my mistress ailing is,
Not willing they should fail to keep the feast,
Her maids are sent away. Not one remains

With her. She knows I could not join the crowd
Honouring their gods. Alas! that she should feed
This roving passion! I do pity her
And tremble for myself. Deliver me,
Oh God, from evil. In temptation's net
Let not my feet be caught. So beautiful
So kind at heart is she. Flight, only flight
Is safety for me. Hold me, else I fall.
—Were I 'mong Hebron's vines, and she revealed
In virgin loveliness, I'd yield my heart
Perforce unasked, and woo her for my own.
But thus! Oh never must my eyes on her
Be covetously cast! Vile sin! vile sin!
Oh God Thou knowest me how weak. By Thee
Till this I stand. Be Thou a present help
In time of need. I ever am in need,
But greatest now. Let better thoughts be hers
Or take me hence, so that the unholy flame
Fed by my presence will grow weak and die,
I unbeheld and then too I would breathe
With more assurance of myself, away
From her deep pining melancholy eyes
And heaving breast. Hark, hark,—even now she calls!
Would that this day were past!

CHORUS.

Oh Man,
Child of the dust and of a brief day,
Coming up from the wilderness
Seeking for a home,
Our thoughts go after thee,
Our hands are spread forth to the heavens for thee !
Ever weak, ever in danger,
And thy way circuitous and strangely marked,
Stay thee upon thy God,
Go on—fear not,
Only say—“Oh God—Almighty—all-seeing—all-
knowing,
Undertake Thou for me,”
And—in faith saying so—
Sleep like a child in its mother’s arms !

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Let us not forget those burning words we heard
Ruffling the silence in yon gorgeous chamber.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

Ah words of danger to that much-wronged youth !

— — —

CHORUS.

Joseph, Joseph, Joseph,
Feel now, even now, that thy God is near,
Be not strong in thine own strength,
Be weakness itself,
In human weakness, God perfecteth strength.
Deep valleys hast thou passed through,
But a deeper is there before thee,
Terrible :—for sense will deem it safe and pleasant,
Faith's eye alone, sees it—destruction.
The Enticer will assail thee,
Through the yielding gates of humanity assail thee,
Her voice will fall on thine ear,
From her shady bower thou wilt hear it.
Self-trust—
Forsake it—forsake it—
The seeing see not,—the blind walk safely on.
Where art thou—where art thou
On thy knees ?
Yea ! yea ! we see thee,
Blessed be the “ Fear of Isaac ! ”
The fearer of God
Has nought else to fear !

*SCENE IV.—Zuleekha's Chamber.**ZULEEKHA RECLINING ON A COUCH, ALONE.**(Joseph enters.)**Zuleekha.* You heard my voice.*Joseph.* So, lady, I am here.
Thine to command.*Zuleekha.* You heard, and you obeyed,—
Duty's cold act,—but*Joseph.* If I disobeyed
Ungrateful I would be. My master lifts
Me daily higher. I would fain repay.*Zuleekha.* Through me you are so held. But what is all
To what I could do. Ah! you cannot tell
How high I hold thee.*Joseph.* Lady, your commands.*Zuleekha.* I do not give commands. And yet I have
Wishes unsatisfied. Ah! you but seem
Dull when I speak. Look! let your eyes drink in
Knowledge from mine. Wishes that you can crown,
Must crown. Wilt see me die and you can save?*Joseph.* I will do aught that me becomes.

Zuleekha.

Away

With servile language. Speak, as you would speak
In love's ear, which deems boldness only sits
Of right on lover's lips.

Joseph.

Joseph. Your draught hath been
Prepared and left within.

Zuleekha.

Oh, sick indeed !

Draught,—no ! This pillow shift.

(She throws her arms round Joseph's neck, who draws away.)

Joseph (to himself).

Joseph (to himself). Would they were come,
And I were safe!

Zuleekha.

Think you not I am sick ?

Sweet youth, believe me, I am sick to death.
Here at my heart the pain is. Here the fire
Is burning fiercely. All my strength is gone
Into this pain for thee. Love hath no law
But loving more and more. The gods give love.
Sweet youth, dost hear ?

Joseph.

Lady, bethink yourself

I am thy——

Zuleekha.

Zuleekha. Nay, say, say not what thou art
I make thee. Thou art noble, wealthy, free.
Than Potiphar than Pharaoh higher throned.
Love crowns thee. Wouldst thou swim in bliss—come,
come.

No son of beauty, youth, warm life, can cheat
His very being. Thou art all a-fire ;

Oh, in the groves, this room, love pants, is free,
Sweet youth —

Joseph. I'll bring thy draught to thee. Yes, yes,
Thy draught bring —

Zuleekha. Death! Thou hast it. From thy mouth
I'll drain it. Do not fear. Sweet youth, sweet youth,
Seclusion sure, no foot, no eye, no ear —

Joseph. My mistress!

Zuleekha. Mistress! So, thou'st nought to fear.
Ah, me! ah, me! Unloose this lace of pearls
And let me breathe. Thou lovest. Do not say,
Sweet youth, sweet youth —

Joseph. All that my master hath,
Save thee, because thou art his wife, he gives
Into my hands.

Zuleekha. For me he cannot give.
But I can give. My love is all my own.
His wife! So I the more am free to give.
Richer the prize, the pleasure, rapturous more.
That every fence is overleaped, trodden down,
To fall into the loved one's arms. His wife!
Sweet youth, I hold thee mine, and here, deep here,
Thou dwell'st, and still wilt dwell, as thou art mine.
Walls have no eyes no ears. Love is but here,
The city is without. I'll kiss thee with
The kisses of my mouth. Nought wilt thou fail
To reach so loving me.

Joseph.

Sin ever fails.

Zuleekha. Sin ever fails ! To love is to obey.
Dare not the gods. Come, I will pour this nard
Upon thy curls. Did'st think me false before ?
Thou know'st me now. But yet I was not false
In look or word. Here, let thy hand steal round
My panting side, and know ——

Joseph.

But Potiphar ——

Zuleekha. Think Potiphar is dead. He lives to me,
Not thee. I live to thee, and thou art safe ;
But only safe within these arms, not else !
Oh, here thou wilt be sheltered, wilt be safe.
Who shall—can—know the secret of our souls
Drinking each other's life ?

Joseph.

Ah ! conscience lives
And makes the guilty feel that all is known.

Zuleekha. Death ! Love not loving, only guilty is.
To smother love is sin. Love's lullaby
Sends every fear to sleep.

Joseph (greatly confused).
Shall I go call your maids ?

Oh, you are ill,

Zuleekha (springing up). Fury ! My maids !
Have me, or by the power that wakes this fire
Sevenfold through all my veins ——

Joseph.

Lady, be calm !

Zuleekha. Ah, me ! I faint !

(Joseph catches her falling.)

Joseph. Oh, think! (*to himself*) What shall I do?
Oh, God, my father's God! keep me this hour!
Pity and passion in me rise. I sway
In the wild wind unhelmed. Oh, God! oh, God!
(*To Zuleekha.*) Come to thy couch. The perfume will
revive.
I'll bring it to thee.

Zuleekha. Bring it not, sweet youth,
(*Throwing her arms round his neck.*) Sweet youth, sweet
youth! thou lovest me. Oh, yes!
I better feel.

Joseph (*placing her on the couch, endeavours to free himself*).
Lie down!

Zuleekha. Come, lie with me!

Joseph. Sin against God and thee!

Zuleekha (*seizing him*). Love me! or, death!
Ha! dost thou think thou wilt not, and yet live?
By Isis! no. And thou wilt turn away,
Iron, marble mockman! Ah! I hold thy life!
Love feeds on death. It swallows up all life,
Hugging or killing. I to woo, and thou —
Unhappy me! oh!

Joseph. Woman! let me go!
(*Joseph bursts away, leaving his outer robe in her hand.*)

Zuleekha (*alone*). I am then mocked! By Pharaoh's life I
swear
This shall be death! He will accuse. Ha! ha!

(Holding up the rent robe.) I tore it from his back, struggling even here,
With him attempting me. How shall his words
Not damn him when with tears I speak and show
This rag in proof. Yes, I do see my way
Out of the depths, not out alone, but through
Them to a higher glory in the sight
Of Potiphar.

(Sits for a moment then springs up again.)

Cold slave of slaves, my hands
Could tear his eyes out! That he should contemn
Me wooing him! But he shall not escape,
No not escape. I'll teach him what love is
Despised, resisted.

(Pauses, and bursts into tears.)

Oh! who is like me?
Still thrown on ways blocked up, beat back, denied,
Astray at every step! This house—a jail,
Thrice-stanchioned,—yet, my movements are my own.
Ha! why this burning nature, and not free,
Freely to breathe? or, why not given with it
Wit to find freedom?

(Pauses.)

Do I love the slave?

Alas! alas!

(Pauses.)

Down! I shall have his life!
His beauty, stature, youth—away, these add
Madness to wrath! He, to reject my love!

Why did I stoop? Why came he in my sight?
Oh! I am weakness 'self! But in my path
He shall not walk with side glance flouting me.
Even though he spoke no word, his very sight
Would sink, would kill.

(*Pauses.*)

Ah! but the slave will speak,
Complain, accuse! So be it! I can turn
His words to blackest falsehood ere they pass
His lips. I can. Here is the thing will choke
His cries for mercy. I must save myself,
And I shall do it. Joseph! Is he aught
To me that I should grieve? Forbear, forbear,
Misgiving heart, to whisper thus: "Thy hate
Is but the very ardour of thy love,
Thwarted, cross-tested." Lying heart, I hate!
My name, my life under his lip he holds,
And faithfulness to's master, to his trust
Will free that lip. Hark! there even now they come
Home from the festival! Their master's wheels
Will soon be heard. Quick, quick, then to my course!
But stay! a thought! Could I not save his life,
Yet ask his death! My tears must flow for this.
His life is forfeit through me. But here comes
My husband.

(*Potiphar enters.*)

Potiphar. Oh, Zuleekha, art thou worse?
Why weepest thou?

Zuleekha. My husband ! art thou there ?

Potiphar. Yes, dearest, yes ! But tell me art thou worse ?

Tell me at once.

Zuleekha. Oh, 'tis thyself ! my head ——

Potiphar. Be calm ! be calm ! Why did I not remain
At home with thee.

Zuleekha. Would that thou hadst been by.
Not worse, yet, greatly worse. The sickness gone
That kept me bedfast —— I am shaken with fear ——
That slave ! Could I have dreamed that e'er my couch
Would be insulted by that favoured slave !
Favoured ——

Potiphar. Thy couch insulted ! Joseph ! say,
What has he done ?

Zuleekha. As quietly I lay,
The servants gone to keep the festival,
By my indulgence, Joseph, staying behind,
So his request was, came into my room
And here, I blush to tell it, tried to draw
Me to his lust. Upspringing to resist
I cried aloud and struggled, when he fled,
Leaving this in my hand.

(Showing the torn garment.)

Potiphar. Oh, fearful tale !
Where is the wretch ? His life will pay for this.
Let him be seized at once. Ho ! servants there !

Zuleekha. Yet, wait a little.

Potiphar. Not a moment, ho!
(*Servants come.*)

Where are you all? Is Joseph in the house?

Servants. In his own business room.

Potiphar. Bid him come here,
Or bring him up by force if he refuse.
(*Servants retire.*)

Zuleekha. Oh, husband, let me speak. If Joseph's
tongue
Hath silent been among them there, thy mouth
Should not make known this shameful act of his.
Accuse him not just now. He knows full well
His guilt. 'Twould humble us to let them hear.
Death he deserves, but, oh—

(*Bursts into tears.*)

Potiphar. Dearest! be calm!
I cannot clearly think. Into thine hands
I give the foul deceiver. Thou wilt say
What's to be done.
(*Servants come back, Joseph in front of them.*)

Servants (behind him whisper.) Speak, Joseph, for thyself.

Potiphar. He needs not here.

Zuleekha. What hath he said to you?

Servant. He will not open his mouth.

Zuleekha (aside to Potiphar). He knows his guilt.

(Joseph looks at her, but remains silent.)

Zuleekha (aside.) Ah! this will break my heart. He
does not speak.

More noble even than fair. Alas! alas!

I see it now. Could I my deed undo,

But that is vain!

(Covers her face with her hands.)

Potiphar. To prison with him straight,
In fetters place him. Go! no word exchange
Between you thither. To the Keeper say,
I follow you.

(Joseph is removed.)

Zuleekha (aside). Woe! woe! this dreadful day!
My hate hath purged my love. I'll love thee still,
But now thy goodness, nobleness, for thou,
Loyal to Potiphar and to thy God,
Hidest my shame, wilt hide it. Be it so,
Sweet youth, and thou shalt find a hand unseen
Defending thee and opening up a way
For thy deliverance.

Potiphar. Zuleekha, dear,
Come to thy couch. I will not leave thee now,
Thou'rt all to me. Be calm. All, all to me!

CHORUS.

Where is the Hero, the Self-Conqueror ?
In the 'midst of the darkness he is
Sighing in his dungeon-cell,
But his soul is kept in peace.
Sorely tempted from without,
Treachery lurking within.
Whence came that stern wisdom,
That might of the spirit to resist ?
The Temptress lured him,
Whispering, said, " Ah ! the pleasure ! "
The warmth of young life
Like a sea rolled over him,
He quivered, but, he stood,
And unshaken he remains,
Though he trembles, looking back.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Happy youth, God-honoured Hero,
In the midst of thy tears,
In the midst of thy groans,
Give thanks, give thanks,

Forget thy thralldom, rise over thy sorrow,
Thy fetters are golden,
Thy cell joyous with the light of true freedom,
Soar in the divine smile.
Who can chain the freeman of God ?

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

Yea, sing ! But say in thy song,
“ Helped hitherto by the Lord,
I will go on even as I am led.
Dark must the way be
That leads from earth to heaven.
But to trust in God is a plain path,
And my feet take hold of the way.”

SCENE V.—The Prison House.

JOSEPH IN FETTERS.

Joseph. Jehovah, be Thou near me! Thou hast led,
Oh, surely Thou hast led, blessed be Thy name,
Me hitherto! To Thee I did commit
Ever my way, still graciously inclined
In heart to this, through my dear father's word
Of counsel and command, which Thou did'st make
Effectual to their end, else, 'mid my griefs
And sufferings sore, how could I, weakness, stand
Unbroken and hopeful. I am here to-day
(I say it softly, giving Thee the praise
Of grace preventative), not through my fault
Of sinning against Thee in that fierce fire
Of fleshly conflict. Potiphar! I blame
Thee not, as thou believest in my guilt,
That I am here. Nor will I blame even you,
My brethren (oh, that cruel, cruel day
Is ever uppermost), who did me slay
In heart and then sell to the Ishmaelite.
By a dark providence, for some wise end,
Doubtless, I here am found. But it must be,
As God is God, that all His ways are deep.
Do all Thy will, my God, I trust in Thee,

Thou for me, all is for me, friend and foe.
— If any hand is raised to work him ill
Who puts his trust in Thee, the blow it deals
Thou over-rul'st for good, but on that hand
Injurious descends Thy righteous wrath.
But, oh ! yet hear me. For their wrongs to me
My brethren visit, but repentance give
With their remorse and tears, and that false tongue
Which sent me here, rebuke, but not root out.
Pity that frail one, pity her, oh God,
And from the snare deliver.

(Pauses.)

Can it be !

This is a fearful place ! These irons cut
Into my flesh. I have been here for months,
I cannot tell how long, I lose my way.
On, my dear father, I am dead to thee,
Dead, buried out of sight. Thou knowest not
My case. For this, oh God, I thankful am.
Let him believe me dead, that he may find
The comfort in his sorrow that my pains
Are at an end. And Benjamin, my own
Dear brother, am I also dead to thee ?
Or look'st thou still for me ? Cease not to look,
I see thee looking out.

(Pauses, much moved.)

Oh God ! oh God !

Uphold, uphold. The thought of home o'ercomes.
Let not my soul take wings from Thee, but keep

Me close unto Thyself. Thou art my Rock,
My Refuge, my high tower, my resting place,
My home, my all!

(Falls asleep.)

THE KEEPER OF THE PRISON DRAWS NEAR.

Keeper (contemplating Joseph asleep). How peacefully he
sleeps! I never looked
Upon a face so beautiful. Can guilt
Sleep thus? Crime hardened, that has cast the fear
Of gods and man off, may sleep sound, but no,
Not thus, not thus! Pure innocence alone
So slumbers! Wherefore art thou then in chains?
A slave indeed,—but Potiphar advanced
Thee o'er his household,—Potiphar, now dead.
Strange! his last word in life should be to loose
Thee from thy bonds! That word I now obey.
— Ah! did some lying tongue poison his ear
Against thee guiltless? And why named he not
Ever thy crime? Even so it must have been,
For thou art good and virtuous and true,
I dare take oath. I know it. I have watched
Thee narrowly, and by Osiris' throne
Thou blameless art. But, hard fare, darkness, chains
Are at an end. Only the outer walls
Must still confine. Within these thou art free

To move. So now I'll have thee at my side.

(Lays his hand on Joseph.)

Joseph ! I bring good news !

Joseph (startled).

Oh ! it is thou.

Keeper. I loose thy fetters. Is not that good news ?

Joseph (trembling). What now awaits me ?

Keeper.

Do not fear. Thou'rt free

From these vile irons. Only thou must be

Inside the prison walls.

Joseph.

What meaneth this ?

Keeper. Fear not. Thy life is safe. Under command

Of the Chief Captain, thou art now released

From rigorous confinement. Nought remains

Of punishment, save that the prison walls

Must hold thee yet.

Joseph.

Hath Potiphar so said ?

Keeper. Even ere he died, for Potiphar is gone

Now to his rest, this order he did give.

Joseph. My master dead ! *(Aside.)* Did he indeed
believe

Me guilty at the last ? It looks as if

The pain of that conviction had been eased

Before he fell on sleep. Oh, that the truth

May, on his soul so generous and high,

Have clearly dawned. *(To the Keeper.)* This order comes
from him ?

(Keeper.) Straight from his mouth to thee.

Joseph. You heard him, then ?
Yet how hath this come round ? But, Keeper, hear,
Nought did I to my master that he should
Have sent me here, and yet he did not sin
Against himself in this. His ear drank in
A lie as very truth. But 'tis enough !
No more have I to say. God, whom I serve,
Hath me delivered. Thou wast ever kind,
Even from the first, to me.

Keeper. Come quickly then,
And change thy dress, and eat, and see the sun
In the open court, glad sight ! and feel the air
Fresh on thy brow.

Joseph. My limbs are stiff and weak,
I scarce know what I do. Am I awake
Or dreaming ?

Keeper. Wide awake ! Lean on my arm.
Now come away !

(*They go.*)

Joseph (aside). Zuleekha ! is thy hand,
Through Providence, in this ? Strange, I should think
Of thee and thus ! But God is pitiful
And knows our frame, and has the heart of each
In His own keeping !

SCENE VI.—Court of the Prison.

WARDERS AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

First Warder. Life for the one, and death for the other.

Second Warder. So says justice.

First Warder. Can justice not pass by a fault when repented of?

Third Warder. I thought they were both equally guilty.

Second Warder. Oh rumour always tells both more and less than the truth.

First Warder. Pharaoh is wise and merciful, it is said. He thinks the Baker guilty—not the Butler. These dreams were very strange, and both in one night.

Third Warder. Strange, indeed! But if they had not told Joseph they would have been nothing.

Second Warder. You mean—if Joseph had not with knowledge stranger and more wonderful than the dreams themselves revealed their meaning.

First Warder. Wisdom such as his comes from the gods.
(*Joseph passes through the court.*)

There Joseph goes his rounds! Nothing is left undone by him. Firm and decided he is, yet he keeps all things going smoothly.

Second Warder. Everything has indeed gone well since he got charge under the Keeper.

Third Warder. Noble in face and person !

First Warder. We have never found out wherefore he was cast into prison and is still kept within the gates.

Second Warder. I would give something to know that.

Third Warder. He'll come to power yet. Could the Diviners have read these dreams ?

Second Warder. Oh the dreams were plain. Look ye ! The Cup-bearer's dream was a good dream. He squeezed the grapes into the cup and gave it to Pharaoh, but the birds ate the bake-meats from the tray on the chief-cook's head.

First Warder. Yes, yes, we know the Butler's dream was a good one, for it has turned out so, and the Baker's was a bad one, for the poor fellow is hanged.

Second Warder. I daresay you are right, after all.

Third Warder. Well, well, Joseph read the dreams aright, at any rate. The Butler will surely speak a word for Joseph to the King.

First Warder. He should do so, but will he ? that's another thing.

Third Warder. Ah ! there is not much gratitude going now-a-days ! But the prisoners must turn in. How time flies !

CHORUS.

Joseph, thy sun is breaking through the cloud,
But, yet a little, ere the full day be.
Didst think thou wert passed over by thy God?
No, no, thou didst not. Yet the path was dark
Thou hadst to tread. Still trust in God, and wait
Upon His hand. Who is at peace but he
So waiting?

SCENE VII.—The Royal Palace.

THE KING'S CUP-BEARER, CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD,
CHIEF PHYSICIAN.

Captain. And the wise men have been sent for ?

Chief Physician. Yes, from all quarters, and in great haste. The King is perplexed in spirit,—is, in short, in a high fever from mental agitation.

Cup-bearer. The dreams then must appear to be ominous.

Chief Physician. He says very little directly about them. But whatever they are, they have made a deep impression on his mind.

Cup-bearer. The gods send dreams. The magicians and wise men will no doubt be able to read them.

Captain. And they may not be able. They will make a guess, however. The half of their wisdom is cunning guessing. Knowing fellows, these magicians.

Chief Physician. What, Captain, are you an infidel ?

Captain. Of the same faith as yourself. But what if they should not be able ? Pharaoh will soon forget the dreams. Dreams do not bother me.

Cup-bearer. Ah, there is something prophetic in dreams!
(*Aside*) I must to the King's chamber. My prison dreams !

Joseph, the Hebrew, read them. It is now—how long? two years—and I have done nothing for his deliverance. I have left him to pine in prison. He was kind to me—spoke comforting words to me in my distress—and then to crown all, read my dreams favourably and truly. Ungrateful! shame to me! But the magicians will soon be here. 'Tis well it is so. I may have an opportunity—I wish I may—of speaking for poor Joseph.

Chief Physician. I must see these men before they talk with the King to inform them fully of his state. A word or two from me will be of service to them.

Captain. Tell them to pooh pooh the dreams. And you—do you prescribe a draught—some brimming cups of good wine—to be swilled in the light of Egypt's beauty amidst dance and song. He will then have new dreams that will make him laugh at the old.

Chief Physician. A very soldier's cure!

SCENE VIII.—Royal Presence Chambers.

KING, MAGI, CUP-BEARER, CHIEF PHYSICIAN, AND OTHER
OFFICIALS.

The Archimagus. Oh, Pharaoh, live for ever! Let all
knees
Do worship to the King. Thy servants we!
(*Magicians bow down.*)

King. Ye whom the gods instruct to trace their steps
In the wide heavens,—the stars—the shifting clouds—
The stainless blue—the wind, its path and force—
The lightning-flash—the thunder-clap—the rain,—
And, in the earth below,—the flower—the fruit—
The tree—the herb—the grass—the sighing sedge—
The sunbeam on the bosom of the Nile—
The fish—the fowl—the wild beast and the tame,—
But chiefly in the secret human soul—
The voices and the visions of the night,—
(For consciously there is a truer world
Over this outward which we see and tread)
Read ye my dreams.

Archimagus. Oh, Pharaoh, as the sun
Shine down on us. Thou sayest. Everything
In nature seen or only felt and known
Within man's spirit—springs and is controlled

Through agency divine ;—its own god—each
Thing overwatching in the sphere marked out
By great Osiris, god of all the gods.
The gods are near, nor cold, nor dumb,—do thou
Tell us, thy servants, and their servants true,
Thy dreams, and we will show thee what they mean.

King. Do ye not know my dreams ? Behold I stood
Upon the river's brink and there came up
Out of the river seven well-favoured kine
Fat-fleshed, and they did feed among the sedge ;
And straight came seven ill-favoured and lean-fleshed
Out of the river also after them,
And on the brink beside the others stood.
And lo ! the ill-favoured and lean-fleshed ate up
The fat and goodly seven, but yet remained
Such as I never saw in all the land
Of Egypt for their badness. Then I woke :
But slept again, and dream'd in my dream
I saw seven ears of corn shoot quickly up
In one stalk full and good, and after them
Seven other ears appear, but withered—thin—
And by the east wind blasted, and this seven
Devoured the seven ears that were rank and good,
Then I awoke. What mean the dreams ?

*(The wise men look at each other
perplexed and remain silent.)*

King. Why stand
Ye silent thus ? Ye now have heard my dreams.

Be not afraid to speak. The truth will live
Or good or bad whether I will or no.
Speak out at once. I will accept the word
By great Osiris sent.

(They are still silent.)

Do ye not hear?
Speak! I will call to mind,—for in my dreams
I know their import, but 'tis gone from me,
Yet not so fully gone, but that your words
Will bring it back.

(They are still more perplexed.)

Archimagus.
Light may come soon.

The dreams are dark as yet,

One of the Magi.

I say the dreams are good!

King. Their meaning then!

Same voice.
Can I yet say.

Only that they are good

Another of the Magi.
Good more than ill.

Not wholly good, but mixed,

(The King looks at the Vizier.)

Vizier.
Trifle not with the King,
Speak out if that ye know. The King's commands
Are final.

The Magi. Both the dreams we think are good,
Farther we cannot say.

King. Ye cannot say,
What now? Their skill's at fault. Bid them withdraw.
(*The Magicians retire.*)

King (after a pause). And yet I would the interpretation
learn
Of my strange dreams—for that they have been sent
By great Osiris, and have in them hid
Precursive information of events
Or sad or prosperous soon to take place
In this our realm. Are of a truth then all
Egypt's Diviners dumb?

Butler (kneeling). Oh, Pharaoh, hear !
Let me, even me, before thee ope my mouth.
My faults I do remember here this day.
The King was with his servants wroth, and me
And the Chief Baker did he put in ward.
And lo ! we dreamed in one night, I and he,
Each his own dream, and in the prison too
A young man was detained, a Hebrew youth,
Who for his worth had given into his hand
Under the Keeper much of prison affairs
To manage, and to him we told our dreams,
And as he read them so it came to pass,
Me he restored unto mine office, but
The Baker hanged.

King. What is the Hebrew's name?

Butler. Joseph.

King. Go, bring him forthwith, and be all
At hand against he come. This Hebrew youth—
If he shall read my dreams—doubtless the gods
Have sent him to us.

CHORUS.

Trouble in the Palace,
Recourse had to the prison,
Relief expected from the hand of the slave,
Joseph, thine hour is come,
The ingrate has been forced to speak,
And thy skill is needed—even thine.
Startle not—be not afraid,
Come on to Pharaoh—come straight !
See we not God's hand here ?
Gift and grace He bestows,
Not for sole possession, but for the good of all ;
He links us together by our wants,
By our powers to give mutual help,
So the human race is His great family
And every man is a neighbour.

SCENE IX.—Street leading to the Palace.

CITIZENS IN NUMBERS STANDING ABOUT.

First Citizen. The King ill! Then he is something like a poor man after all. What ails his Majesty?

Second Citizen. He is not ill, and he is not well,—well of a truth, ill of a fancy. Having plenty of money, good clothes, and tasty meat, and not needing to rise very early in the morning, what right has he to be ill?

Third Citizen. Ay, what right I should like to know? But then he thinks he is ill and that settles the question, for kings are positive, and must have their own way.

First Citizen. There are other people positive as well as kings.

Fourth Citizen. Who are they?

First Citizen. Ask your good wife when you go home.

Fourth Citizen. If I remember. But you do not need to ask, you know already.

Third Citizen. Seriously, what is all the stir about?

Second Citizen. A dream,—you know what a dream is?

First Citizen. Something in your head when you are sleeping, or rather in your belly. I dreamed this morning after I rose,—no, just before I opened my eyes,—that I was

roaming about till I got hungry and began to snap at everything, so I jumped up at once and hollered for my breakfast.

Second Citizen. Ah, a vulgar dream, and anybody could read it. But the King's is a royal dream. All the wise men in the land cannot tell the meaning of it.

Fourth Citizen. Ay, ay! But what are the folk all looking for?

Second Citizen. There is a wonderful man, it seems, in the prison who can read any dream. He was put into the prison for doing nothing, which is a great crime. At least, nobody can tell anything about him. But look! yonder comes a chariot, and the crowd is all moving. He will be in it, I guess.

Fifth Citizen. He is a Hebrew, they say.

First Citizen. Then we shall know him by his beard. Which of the three is he?

Second Citizen. Not the two farthest off. They are officers of the King's. I know them to look at. The one next us is not a Hebrew, he has not a long beard. But he is a fine-looking young fellow.

First Citizen. If he can read dreams I do not know. He looks well, at any rate. But he is too young to be a wise man. All the wise men are old and fat and grim. He is a man for the ladies. Ladies do not care for wise men.

Fifth Citizen. Oh, that is the dream-reader,—a Hebrew,—

only he has shaved himself to appear like a gentleman before the King. They are for the Palace, you see. I must be going. They won't let me in. We'll hear to-morrow. Wait till to-morrow, friends.

First Citizen. It is always till to-morrow with me. But it keeps one alive and lets all of us have a fortune coming, each according to his fancy.

SCENE X.—Outer Court of Palace.

ZULEEKHA, IRAS, BELKIS, AND OTHER LADIES STANDING.

Iras. Oh, I long to see the handsome youth again,—the beauty,—the angel! Do you remember, Belkis, when we followed him in the street? How we envied you, Zuleekha, who had him within doors.

Belkis. Ay, even till Potiphar's door closed on him. But is it indeed Joseph that has been sent for? The King's dreams completely puzzle all the wise men, it would appear. Did not the priest of On say so, Zuleekha?

Zuleekha. I am quite certain of that.

Belkis. Well, well, will it not be something very wonderful if the Hebrew youth should explain them?

Zuleekha. He has given proof of his skill in dream-reading already, you know that. He is favoured. He obeys his God.

Iras. Osiris?

Belkis. Isis?

Zuleekha. Tush! He is a Hebrew, not an Egyptian.

Iras. I am always wondering what turned his master against him. If I had been in your slippers, Zuleekha, it

would not have been old Potiphar that would have taken him out of the house. Potiphar never told you his fault?

Zuleekha. He never told me that.

Belkis. Iras! Iras! It makes Zuleekha sad to speak of Potiphar so. Is it not lucky we are all here at Memphis? You might have been now at dull On, Zuleekha, had not the King sent for the Archimagus.

Iras. Sad! Why should she be sad? If I were single like her I would propose to Joseph. I would not mourn after my old lord, I can assure you.

Belkis. That noise. They are at the outer gate.

Zuleekha (aside). Oh, my poor heart, be calm!

Iras. They'll pass us on foot. I see them leaving the chariot. It is Joseph, and no other! I would know him among ten thousand! Poor fellow, he will be frightened to be sent for by the King.

Belkis. Zuleekha is frightened.

Zuleekha. Oh, I only wish that he may be able to read the King's dreams!

Belkis. If he does that his fortune is made.

Iras. He will get a princess for his wife then, you may be sure. Eh, Zuleekha? There he is!

Zuleekha (aside). Oh, beauteous youth! my thought by day, by night,
Thou wast sore wronged. Forgive! I do repent.
How feel'st thou seeing me! Shame covers me.

Thou need'st not be ashamed. Thy God look down
Well-pleased and favouring, give thee strength and skill.
Paler thy face !

(Joseph passing salutes Zuleekha.)

Dost thou salute me ? Oh !

What art thou—god or man ? If man—indwelt
By the good Spirit. If a god—thy smile
Shall be the heaven I seek.

Iras. Nobler and fairer still ! If he were mine
I'd screen him with my veil from all your eyes
In some sweet islet of the gentle Nile !

Zuleekha. Oh you would steal him, then.

Iras. Come, come, Zuleekha, own it, own it.
These drops are not for Potiphar.

Zuleekha. Have you just one thing to talk about ?

Belkis. The truth is we are all in love with him. But
now let us try and learn as soon as we may if he reads the
dreams and what they mean. He'll beat the magicians
and all the rest of them, I warrant you. I am sure of it.

SCENE XI.—The Royal Presence Chamber.

KING, MAGI, OFFICERS OF STATE.

*Joseph enters, conducted by proper officials. All eyes turned on him.**Cup-bearer.* Long live the King! Behold the Hebrew youth!*(Joseph makes obeisance.)**King.* I've heard of thee, young man, that thou canst read

The secrets of the future oft wrapt up
In marvellous scenes which pass before the mind
In sleep. Behold I dreamed, and there is none
That can interpret.

Joseph. It is not in me,
Of my own power, to read thy dreams, O King!
God will an answer give of peace to thee.

King. The gods are kind to send us warning dreams,
Albeit we weakly fail to unriddle them,
Not favoured with the knowledge. It may be
In punishment for our neglect to bring
Due offerings.

Joseph. Unto the Living God
Whose Kingdom ruleth over all I look.

King. Know'st thou the dreams I had upon my bed?
First of the kine seven good and feeding full
Among the sedge up from the river came,—
Straight followed by seven lean that swallowed them
But were not fleshed the more for all they ate.
Next of the seven good ears on the one stalk
By the seven devoured that sprang up after them,
Nor by devouring of the rank and full
Were better made.

Joseph. From thy own mouth, O King!
As from thy servants now thy dreams I know.
Thy dreams are but one dream—only one dream.
God hath to Pharaoh showed what is to be.
The seven good kine the seven good ears are one,
Seven years from this when there will in the land
Great plenty be—so great—the barns will fail
Of room to hold. The seven ill-favoured kine
Lean-fleshed and thin with the seven blasted ears
Of corn are also one :—seven pinching years
Of famine sore and grievous, following close
Upon the abundant,—so severe—that all
The former plenteousness shall be forgotten—
Not known in all the land.

King. Yea, that is it.
Thou speakest truth. Now I do call to mind
What in my dreams I knew, but waking lost.
Thy wisdom cometh from the gods.

Magi (muttering among themselves). This young man can
divine! A Hebrew slave!

How dull we were! We should have read the dreams.
We would have done so had the King not known
Their meaning in his sleep. How very plain
The whole thing is.

Joseph. God hath to Pharaoh shown—
Not I—the truth. And further that the dream
Was doubled twice—this is—because the thing
Established is by God, who shortly will,
Yea, from this very hour, bring it to pass.

King. Thy God hath sent thee here!

Joseph. Even so, O King!
And further words I have for thee.

King. Say all
Thy God commissions thee: I will obey.
Great is thy God!

Joseph. Even this. Over the land
Let Pharaoh set a man discreet and wise,
Who under him shall officers appoint
To take the fifth part of the land, and store
The produce thereof through the plenteous years
In central cities, that there may be food
Against the famine following—so the land
In the long famine perish not.

King. The thing
Thou sayest is good.

(Addressing the Courtiers.)

What do ye think ?

Vizier.

As thou,

Oh Pharaoh, we. The thing is good, and from
The gods it comes.

Voices.

Yea, from the gods it comes !

King (turning to Joseph). Now, forasmuch as God hath
showed me this,

In wisdom and discretion there is none
Like unto thee. The Spirit of thy God,
The great God, dwells in thee. And what am I ?
His servant to obey. Over my house
I place thee, and my people thou shalt rule
According to thy will. But in the throne
Shall I be greater in the land than thou.
Reach forth thy hand.

(The King puts his ring on Joseph's hand.)

King (turning to the Officers of State). Let this my
minister

Chief under me in Egypt be arrayed
In robes of his high place. The chariot next
To mine be his. And when he rides abroad
Let heralds cry before him,—“ Bow the knee ! ”
That all may honour him !

Courtiers.

God save the King !

And let all honour him who next the throne
Is greatest in the land !

(Joseph greatly moved.)

King. Fear not, my son,
Thy God did bring thee here. I Pharaoh am,
But without thee in all the land shall none
Lift hand or foot.

Joseph. Let righteousness uphold
Thy throne, O King, and let thy servants all
Be faithful, wise, and just! But can it be
That I am standing—where?

(Seems confused.)

King. Fear not, my son,
Thou standeth in thy God.

Joseph. So strangely I
Am placed, I cannot clearly think. O King,
Thy word I hear—I do not say thee nay,—
I dare not say thee nay, knowing my God,
The Living and the True, leads and controls.
Here in His hand I am. To thee, through Him,
I give myself, O King! But memories,
Tender and various, like a mighty wave
Roll over me,—I cannot stem their rush,
And would not, for my heart is borne along
And I go with them. Bear with me, O King!
So sudden this great change,—a little rest,—
To be alone I crave, that I may feel
The truth of all and realize myself
In providence thus placed, and pray for faith
And light and strength.

King. Surely, my son ! But if
In thy breast now past sorrows come to life
Again,—O let us soothe them by our love
To thee and gratitude to the great God
Thou serv'st in truth ! Or, if old joys do seek
To repossess thy bosom, they shall come
Trooping beneath our care in freshened bloom
Not one a-wanting, and have joined to them
New joys and greater as Time's wheel moves round
On its long way !

(To the Chamberlain.)

Conduct the Viceroy forth
To his own chambers !

Chamberlain. Stand ye all aside !

Courtiers (bowing). Long live the King ! And let the
Viceroy be
Ever beside the throne !

(King retires, and Joseph passes out.)

CHORUS.

High places
Are slippery places,
The foot that is sure in the valley
Oft stumbles on the mountain,
Prosperity overcomes
Whom adversity nerves for the fight.
Raised from the gloom of the overhanging rocks
To the light and breeze of the open sky
The heart is lifted up—
The eye wanders abroad,
Then the precipice is overstepped
And the gulf below attests the ruin.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Why should a mortal be proud,
The dweller in a tabernacle of clay,
For an uncertain flight of hours?
Humility, humility
Becomes him ;
In this dress alone
Is he comely in the eyes of Heaven.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

We wept for Joseph in his distresses,
But still our hearts did not tremble,

His enemies were for him,
His sorrows drove him to God,
But, in the Palace there,
On the right hand of Pharaoh,
With Egypt at his feet,
Is he safe,—is he safe ?

CHORUS.

Joseph, Joseph, back to thy God ;
But thou hast not wandered,
No, no, but beware,
Weakness in thyself
And weaker the higher raised,
Lean unreservedly on God,
In Him alone art thou safe
So leaning, let the lofty seat be thine,
The special task be thine,
Thou wilt sit secure,
And remembering all thy sorrowful past
Thou wilt stoop to save the perishing,
For mercifulness grows in the heart that has suffered.
Stoop to lift up
The head of the humbled,
Yea, even the false accuser out of the dust !

PART III.

"COME TO PASS."

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN PART III.

JACOB.	THE VICEROY (<i>Joseph unrecognised</i>)
REUBEN.	JOSEPH (<i>made known to his brethren</i>)
SIMEON.	STEWARD OF JOSEPH'S HOUSE.
LEVI.	HEBREW INTERPRETER.
JUDAH.	WARDERS.
ISSACHAR.	SERVANTS AND OTHER OFFICIALS.
ZEBULUN.	CROWDS IN THE STREETS.
BENJAMIN.	
DAN.	
NAPHTALI.	
GAD.	
ASHER.	

CHORUS OF ANCIENTS.

SCENE.—CANAAN.—EGYPT.

SCENE I.—Jacob's House in Hebron.

JACOB SEATED. HIS SONS STANDING BEFORE HIM.

Jacob. Our stores will fail us soon. The heavens are
brass,

Iron the earth. Oh what can feeble man
Do when the Almighty sendeth not the rain
And dew in season? Let us bow to Him
Who ruleth over all, and let us say
That in His hand our lives are and our ways,
And that He might in righteousness chastise
Even unto death, for we ungrateful are,
Undutiful, and altogether vile.

—How in our plenteousness have we behaved,—
Frugal and charitable to the poor
And humble always? Ah! our hearts condemn.
But God in wrath remembers mercy still.
In Egypt there is corn laid up, I hear,
For this great need out of the overmuch
Of past full years, and lo! peace reigns: (mark ye
God's hand in this, my sons,) the enmity
Of Egypt to the men who eastward dwell
In tents and cattle tend, bars not our way.
And more, their generous King hath given command

To open their stores and even to strangers sell
From any land. Why look ye on yourselves
As robb'd of thought or wit ? Go down, my sons,
Forthwith to Egypt, and, from him set o'er
This great affair by Pharaoh, buy for us
Corn as we need.

Reuben. We will go down at once.
Shall we not go at once ?

All. Yea, even to-day.

Jacob. Then go, my sons. But Benjamin must stay
At home with me. Ye know, my sons, that he,
Since Joseph perished in the way to you,
Is all of Rachel left to me this day.
He shall not go. Ah ! surely I am weak
To tremble so when he is out of sight
Lest evil should befall him as befell
His brother Joseph.

Simeon. Come ! And, Benjamin,
Stay thou at home.

Jacob. Feed ye the asses straight,
And in your sacks take what will be required
Upon the way. Reuben and Judah—ye
Shall bear the money for the food we need
For all our house.

Benjamin. So I must stay at home,—
Content. Though had it been said otherwise,
Father by you, I willingly had gone

Also with them. You should not fear for me
Out of your sight,—not surely—when I am
With my own brethren.

Jacob. When you are with them
I do not fear.

All. Come, let us to the road.
The Lord our father keep and Benjamin
Till we return in peace and joy again.

Jacob. The Lord watch over you, my sons, and give
You favour in the eyes of him who rules
As Pharaoh in the land, and bring you back
Full-laden and well.

All. Amen! amen!

CHORUS.

When a common blow stuns the nations
And their refuge in distress is but one,
 How they forget their enmities,
 Sink their differences,
And mingle humbly—thankfully—
 In the reality of brotherhood,
For all are brothers in the depth of their being !
 Speed round,
 O happy day, O coming day,
When peace shall reign in the earth
And charity bloom in every heart !
 See !
Strangers from every land
Streaming in, no one hindering !
Food they need—food they seek—
 Egypt has abundance.
 This they were told,
 This they believe.
In the strength of their faith they come long ways
And the word of Pharaoh to them all is—
 “Go to Joseph !”

SCENE II.—Memphis. In front of Storehouses.

JOSEPH'S BRETHREN AND OTHER STRANGERS ARRIVING.

Reuben. Let us observe these men—strangers like ourselves—how they do. We shall go after them, and tell our errand to some one who knows the Hebrew tongue. Judah, be you spokesman.

Judah (to Interpreter). From Canaan we are come—I and these men. The famine there is sore, and we have heard my lord the King of Egypt will supply our pressing wants. Silver and gold we bring wherewith to pay.

Interpreter. From Canaan ye are come—how many?

Judah. Ten—all standing here.

Interpreter (aside). And goodly men ye are Hebrews I know, by your long beards.

(*To them.*) I'll tell the Viceroy.

(*Leaves them.*)

Naphtali. Would we were on our way to Hebron back!

All. Surely the great man will supply our need. But there the Interpreter comes.

Interpreter. Ye come to buy. The Governor alone can grant your wish. Go in to him.

Judah. Shall we go bluntly in? Would that be right?

Interpreter. No, better follow me.

Simeon. I trust the man will be gracious to us. I feel strangely uneasy. God turn his heart to us!

All. Amen! amen!

(They go in after the Interpreter.)

SCENE III.—Memphis.—The Viceroy's Official Residence.

JOSEPH, OFFICERS. HIS BRETHREN BROUGHT IN.

OFFICERS WITHDRAW.

Joseph (aside). Oh God! my brethren come! Bowing
to me

Down to the ground! Ah! is my dream fulfilled?
I know them every one,—ten. Where is he
My brother Benjamin? How this? That scene
Returns—the pit—the Ishmaelite. My heart
Sinks in me. Benjamin!

(Speaks to them by an interpreter.)

From whence come ye?

Judah. From Canaan, to buy food thy servants come.

Joseph. From Canaan? Ye are spies. To see the
land—

Its nakedness ye come.

Judah. Not spies, my lord,

But to buy food to Egypt we have come.

We all are one man's sons. We are true men

Sent by our father down. True men are we,

Thy servants are no spies.

All (bowing down to the ground). True men—true men,
Thy servants are no spies!

Joseph. Nay, but to see
The nakedness of Egypt ye be come.

Reuben. Forbid it should be so! We are no spies.
Thy servants are twelve brethren,—all the sons
Of one man in the land of Canaan,—and
Behold the youngest with his father is
This day,—and—one is not. So are we here
All save the youngest, Benjamin, to buy
Food for our father and our families there.
No spies are we, my lord. Forbid that we
Should say aught but the truth unto my lord.

Joseph (aside). My father lives! I thank Thee, oh my
God!

He lives,—and Benjamin, my mother's son!
Help me, if right, to keep my feelings down!
(*Addressing them.*)

Yea, that is it I spake—saying—ye are spies.
Hereby ye shall be proved true men or false:
Ye shall not go from hence except he come,
Your youngest brother, hither. So send ye
One of your number back, and let him fetch
The brother left at home. Ye shall be kept
In prison, that your words to me be proved
Whether be truth in you. Else by the life
Of Pharaoh ye are spies.

(*They look at one another in great perplexity.*)

Simeon. Believe, my lord,
We are no spies!

All (bowing down to the ground). No spies, no spies are we !

Joseph (roughly). Put all these men in ward.

(Officers enter.)

His Brethren (among themselves). Now is God's hand
Laid on us for our sin that woful day
We slew our brother Joseph in our hearts
And sold him to the Ishmaelite.

Officer. Lead forth
The prisoners. No words. Quick—move along !
(They retire under guard.)

JOSEPH, ALONE.

Oh day of God's right hand ! of God's rich grace !
My brethren famine-pressed—in God's love pressed
Bowing to me the Ruler of the land !
I knew them at a glance—they knew not me.
Older—but, ah ! so many years since then
Must leave their mark. My father ! he yet lives,
And Benjamin is with him ! Blessed God,
Thy mercy is too plenteous for my heart,
Hold Thou me up. What shall I say ?

(Pauses.)

They feel
Thy hand in judgment on them for their wrong

To me that day. I caught their muttered words.
Do they repent ?

(*Pauses.*)

My charging them as spies,
Not groundless must appear, for towards their coasts
Egypt is open, and sometimes are made
Raids into Goshen. Benjamin at home !
Is all well here ? Are their words true in this ?
Did I not hear them join that day to lie
Cruelly to their father ? I must take
Sure steps to test their truthfulness—their love
To Benjamin, or whether they do hate
Him, doubtless favoured of his father now
Above them all, both for his mother's sake
And Joseph dead. I must be cautious then,
Decided skilful. But I long to fall
Upon their necks—forgive them—and be named
By them, and have them here, if it may be,
With me in Egypt—have my father here,
And Benjamin, and all their families,
While the five years of famine yet to come
At least do last.

CHORUS.

Jehovah ruleth over all
The universe—each thing that living is
Guiding to a gracious end,
Praise His Holy name !
Man errs from the womb,
Every one turning to his own way,
But ever to find his steps take hold on death,
So he goes not hopelessly astray.
Wisdom, mercy, love, move the wheels of providence,
The wanderer is arrested,
Brought back into the path of life
Each by the special way he must tread
So that he reach the final fold.
Behold the partial father robb'd of his idol,
His heart and treasures are now in God,
Behold the son too much beloved,
Flattered—made giddy—self-strong,
Brought to the palace from the cell.
By suffering prepared to sit humbly on high
To save the perishing—save his own,
But giving the glory to God !
Behold the cruel men who rose against their brother
Sent to them in love,

Who slew him in their heart,
Sold him to slavery—to death,
Are even now in the net ;
Self-abasement—confusion—terror—remorse
Overwhelm them,
And the entanglement of yon blood-stained lie.

SCENE IV.—In front of Storehouses.

INTERPRETER AND OTHER OFFICERS. STRANGERS ARRIVING.

Officer. What said the Governor?

Interpreter. He started when he saw them. You know it takes a good deal to make the Governor start.

Officers. We all know that.

Interpreter. And called them spies come to see the nakedness of the land in the famine.

Officer. And I'll warrant you he is right. There is not a sharper eye in the whole country than his. Leave him to discover a matter. They are Hebrews, it seems.

Interpreter. Hebrews from Canaan.

Officer. Restless men, those who dwell in tents. The Hebrews are shepherds, I have been told. What did you think of them?

Interpreter. So many pouring in—I was glad to get them off my hands. I looked at them, however, more closely after the Viceroy accused them. I would not have thought them spies—that is, judging by their looks. Fine-looking men in form and feature. I could not help marking it;—tall, well-made, though slightly built, brow high and arched, aquiline nose, large lustrous eyes, soft and sweet in expression.

Officer. You must have stared well at them.

Interpreter. Brothers they say they are, and I believe it,—they resemble each other so closely.

Officer. You did not see their beards. You have forgotten to mention their beards.

Interpreter. Oh, we all saw their beards.

Officer. And now they must remain in ward till the Governor is satisfied that they are true men. But see new bands arriving. I think they are here from every country. The Governor would need to look sharp about him. No foreigner must carry corn away till he gives orders.

Officer. None have been refused yet except these Hebrews. He certainly knows something about them, and not much to their credit.

Interpreter. I think he must, else he would not have eyed them so keenly and spoken so.

A servant to Interpreter. The Viceroy is calling for you.

Interpreter. What—have more Hebrews come?

SCENE V.—In Prison.

THE TEN BRETHREN.

Levi. We are in sorry plight. Should we not send to the great man—the Ruler—saying that we are ready to bring the proof he requires?

Reuben. I fear to ask my father to let Benjamin come. Alas the day we lifted up our hands against poor Joseph's life! Trouble and pain have never left us since.

Simeon. No, never since. But speak not of it,—words are lost in speaking of it. It is in our hearts—clearer and blacker every day.

Reuben. I speak not to give needless pain. I open my mouth unwillingly,—but cannot help it. What now is to be done?

Judah. Let us confess to God—forgiveness ask,
And as our penitence is real—cheer
Our father by our love of Benjamin
And carefulness to do our father's will.
Three full days now we have been kept in ward.
The man is only second to the King
In power. Our lives are in his hands. He asks
And we must prove that we are all true men
And not false spies by bringing Benjamin

To him. A humble message let us send
By the warder's mouth, that one of us will go
To Hebron straight and bring down Benjamin
Our youngest brother, if our father will
(This to the great man let us plainly say)
Entrust him to us—for he is his life
Now loved the more

(Pauses from emotion.)

Dan. 'Twill be another blow
To him indeed. But when he knows our lives
Do hang on bringing Benjamin, he'll let
Him go. He may. We'll rather die than ill
Shall come to Benjamin.

Issachar. We'll guard his life.
Even with our own. The warder comes. 'Tis he!
(*Addressing Judah.*) Ask that he get an audience of the man
For one of us—or bring wherewith to write
That we may frame in words our case.

Warder. I come
To lead you to the Viceroy. Follow me,
He must have all things quickly done.

Judah. Oh, sir!
Is my lord angry with his servants still?

Warder. I know not that. Come on.

Simeon. Oh, may the Lord
In mercy turn his heart to take our word
And let us go in peace!

SCENE VI.—Joseph's Room.

JOSEPH SEATED. INTERPRETER AND OTHER OFFICERS STANDING
BY. HIS BRETHREN ARE BROUGHT IN. THEY BOW DOWN
TO THE GROUND.

Joseph. I sent for you. Ye say ye are true men,
Not spies confederate,—but one man's sons.
This do and live then, for I fear the Lord.
Let one remain in prison bound with me
And go the others bearing corn to meet
The need of all at home,—but come again
Bringing your youngest brother unto me,
Then he left bound shall be set free—for so
The words ye spake will be proved true—and none
Of you shall die. Think with yourselves. My word
Ye have now heard.

The Ten (whispering together). See how it is with us.
Oh we were guilty in the thing we did
Unto our brother Joseph on that day,
In that we saw the anguish of his soul
When he besought us and we would not hear,
Therefore is this distress upon us now.

Reuben. Spake I not to you saying: "Do not sin
Against the child," but ah, ye would not hear.
Our brother's blood is now required of us.

*(Joseph overhearing them is moved to tears,
and leaves the room, but returns in a short time.)*

Joseph. Your answer give me.

Judah. What my lord requires
Is good to us. We all are in thy hands,
Thy will is ours.

Joseph (pointing to Simeon). Let him be forthwith bound
And led to prison, where he shall be safe,
And sooner freed the sooner ye return.

(To Interpreter.)

Take these men to the stores and order corn
As they require. The Steward shall be there
Straight after you.

(To the Steward.)

I have commands for thee,

We go aside.

(Rises to leave the room.)

Simeon. The Lord God bless my lord,
I am content—am thine. Thy word a rock
Is to thy servant. Benjamin will come
Freely with them if his poor father yield
To let him go. But if my lord will hear—
Our youngest brother is our father's life,
The only son of Rachel left to him
Who perished at his birth—her other son
Joseph is not. So we do fear the thing
Will slay our father. He . . .

(Simeon pauses from emotion.

Joseph hastens away.)

The Brethren. Jehovah bless
The land of Egypt—Egypt's King and thee,
"Saviour of many lives."

(To Simeon, who is being hurried off.)

God shall watch o'er
And comfort thee and bring us quickly back
With Benjamin! Fear not!

Simeon. All will be well,
Be ye at peace. Let no one mourn for me,
I sinned the deepest of you all that day
Against poor Joseph. I am justly bound.

All. What we desired thou didst. No more than we
Art thou to blame. God pardon us! And now,
Simeon, think not in this wise when alone,
Say thou wilt not.

Simeon. I cheerfully remain.

Officer. This talk must end.

Reuben (looking back to Simeon). We will not let thee die !

CHORUS.

Man judges himself,
The voice of God is in every heart.
Long silent it may be,
But like a sevenfold blast it will awake

The guilty one,
His falsehood, his cruelty, rushing upon him
Is caught at every step.
The wind whispers it,
The earth cannot hide it,
It splits the rock asunder,
Waking day parades it,
Sleep brings it from the land of dreams ;
The gloom of hell envelopes him,
His foot is within the circle of death,
He lives in the reality of self-condemnation.
Therefore shadows affright him,
The faintest sound startles.
Was that the grating of the iron door,
The turning of the executioner's key ?

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Merciful terror !
Beautiful daughter of despair,
Lay hold on the blood-guilty,
Let him not escape !

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

But the door of pardon,
The door of a new life,

Leave wide—open—standing !
Hurry him to his knees,
Force him to cry,—
“ Oh God ! oh God !
My hands are full of blood,
Save me else I perish.
I went astray from Thy ways,
Now would I be Thine,
Wholly Thine, and for ever.
Undo the work of my hands,
Almighty art Thou, Infinite, Holy, Merciful,
Yea, is not Love
Thy crowning name ! ”

SCENE VII.—Hebron. Jacob's House.

JACOB, BENJAMIN. HIS SONS JUST RETURNED.

THE UNLADEN ASSES NEAR.

Jacob. Oh God, Thou hearest prayer ! There are my
sons

In safety and their asses laden ! Give thanks
To God with me. He brings you back. The Lord
Reward you all, my good, kind sons. My eyes
Are blessed indeed !

(Eyes them individually.)

But where is Simeon,

Why tarries he ?

Judah. Simeon is safe, although in Egypt still.

Jacob (starting). In Egypt still !

Judah. But calmly hear ! The man,
The Ruler under Pharaoh, spake to us
Roughly, suspecting we were spies come down
To see the nakedness of the land,—but we
Did answer him, “ We are true men—not spies,
But brethren twelve, sons of our father—and
The youngest with his father is to-day,
And one is not.”

Jacob. Ye spoke the truth. But what
Moved the great man not to let Simeon go?

Judah. The man said, "That is it I spake to you,
Saying—ye are spies. Hereby ye shall be proved.
By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go hence
Except your youngest brother also come
To me. Go one of you and let him fetch
Your brother hither—and ye shall be kept
In prison that your words may so be proved
Whether be truth in you,—or, by the life
Of Pharaoh, ye are spies."

Jacob. But ye are here
Save only Simeon !

Judah. After three full days
In ward he let us go, but Simeon keeps
Till we return and prove as he demands
That we are true men and not spies.

Jacob. Ah, this
Is then another blow ! Sorrow and fear
Have my companions been since that great grief,
And will be to the end. I must be dumb
Lest with my mouth I sin.

(*Pauses.*)

Is Simeon safe?

Judah. Safe till we so go back.

Benjamin. Let us go straight
And bring poor Simeon home. The man but asks

That I be with them. Send us all at once.

Jacob. Alas, my son ! Thou dost not know—nor ye,
My sons, the tumult here. (*Laying his hand on his heart.*)
But tell me now,

Is Simeon really safe ?

Reuben. The great man gave
His word. All praise him. We ourselves do trust
Our brother in his hands.

Issachar. I have no fear,
The man is great indeed, but true as great.
Simeon is safe.

Voices. We all think Simeon safe.

Jacob. Then press me not, my sons. Give me some days
Calmly to think. I may be able soon
To let you all away. I would not be
Distrustful, but my heart is sad and sore
And quivering from the burden that it bears
Of loss and trial.

Reuben. Let your heart to-day,
Father, be cheered ! See the full sacks we bring !

Jacob. I see, I see,—things brighter do appear.
Unlade the asses now.

(*They begin to open the sacks.*)

Levi. Ah ! what is this ?
(*Lifting his bag of money.*)

All. In every sack the money is returned.

Dan. What can this mean? Let us bethink ourselves.

Gad. I feared since at the Khan I found my bag
Of money in my sack.

Jacob. Hide not the truth.
Evil in Egypt gathers like a cloud
Of judgment o'er us. I was forced to send
You down to Egypt. But my father heard
God's voice forbidding him thither to go,—
And Abraham suffered there—faith failed him there.
Ah me! we're brought in anger to the path
That we must tread! Why is the money there?
A pit is dug for us. Ye told the man
Of Benjamin. Why did ye speak of him?
Joseph is not and Simeon, and yet
In face of these dark doings ye will take
My Benjamin away.

Reuben. The money we'll take back,
And when we go trust Benjamin with me.
If I do not bring him back to thee again
Slay my two sons.

Jacob. Nay, nay, he shall not go.
If ill should happen to him in the way
Then shall ye bring my gray hairs to the grave
With sorrow down.

Dan. Yield not to distant fear,
We go not down to-morrow to the man.

Simeon is safe till we return for him,
Food for a time we have. Some light will break
Ere we must go.

Jacob.
That we shall choose !

The Lord teach us the way

SCENE VIII.—Egypt.—The Royal City.

Before the Storehouses.

STEWARD, INTERPRETER AND OTHER OFFICERS.

An Officer. The Governor will be back soon now, I think.

Steward. We expect so. To visit the various store-cities takes time, and he is not the person to do things by halves.

Interpreter. That business requires to be carefully done. Five years of famine yet to come.

Officer. Strangers are still freely supplied. Our own people have the first claim.

Steward. The Governor will not forget their claim. But money is failing in the land.

Officer. People must eat notwithstanding. When money fails other property must go.

Interpreter. He has a heavy charge. I should not like to be in his place. All look to him for food. He is rightly called—"Saviour of many lives!"

Officer. Those Hebrews have not returned to relieve their brother yet. Their store must be running low by this time.

Steward. Simeon—the one left behind—is longing much now to see them with the youngest brother.

Interpreter. Have you found out anything to confirm the Viceroy's suspicion of them?

Steward. I am strictly forbidden to ask him any questions on family affairs. I was, however, to treat him kindly, which I do.

Officer. The Governor could not be unkind to any one.

Interpreter. What if the men come before the Governor returns?

Officer. They would have to be detained.

Steward. That is my order.

Interpreter. If they told the truth about themselves I think they would have been back before this to get their brother released. And yet I cannot believe they are spies.

Officer. There is something unnatural to my mind in their conduct. Let me see—it is now—what? two months since they went home. Why did they not hurry back? You may depend on it the Master is right. Egypt lies open to invasion on their side.

Steward. Simeon is wearying for them, but he says that their father is so bound up in his youngest son that he will not let him go, at least, while their stores last. His mother, who was greatly beloved, is dead, and of her two sons the eldest is gone away years ago—the other is this youngest, and his father is now very old.

Interpreter. But he will certainly never leave this one here to perish.

Officer. Their supply of corn must be running short now. The old man will have to yield. But, poor fellows, what if they have not money to bring?

Steward. They are not without money—I know that.

CHORUS.

Holy men, stand fast in God,
In an hour of fear faith may bend,
But fear is for an hour, faith for the ages to come.
Pilgrims to a better country,
A table is spread for them in the wilderness,
Their wants are ever timely met,
But their wants return and return,
So they can never take their eyes off God.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

Where are those Hebrews ?
He, detained in Memphis, pines for their faces.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

The father will be trembling for that younger son.

CHORUS.

Yes ! yes ! But, Jacob, thy stores are failing,
Stores of Egypt perish in the using,
Benjamin must be sent away,
Thou wilt not be able to withhold him,
He will be forced from thee,
God uses a holy violence with his own,
He pulls the dove into the ark.

SCENE IX.—Hebron.—Jacob's House.

JACOB. HIS TEN SONS NEAR.

Jacob (to himself.) I must not fight with God. Our stores
do fail.

What can I do? His brethren's faces speak,
They open not their mouths.

(The sons draw near.)

I see, my sons,

Our stores do fail. Go ye again and buy
A little food for us.

Judah. The Governor

Did solemnly protest—"Ye shall not see
My face except your brother be with you."
Let Benjamin go with us—we will go
And buy thee food. Thus only we may go.
If otherwise we die.

Jacob. Why have ye dealt

So ill with me as tell the man ye had
A brother here?

Judah. The man did straitly ask

Us of our state and kindred, saying thus—
"Your father, is he yet alive? Have ye
Another brother?" And we spake the truth
According to the tenor of his words.

Could we for certain know that he would say,
"Bring down your brother?"

Levi. Simeon is bound
Till we bring Benjamin.

Jacob. Alas! alas!

Judah. 'Tis even so! Send thou the lad with me,
That we may go and buy that we may live,
We and our wives and little ones. I will
Be surety for him. If I bring him not
Again to thee and set him in thy sight
Alive and well—then let me bear the blame
For ever. Lo! even now we had returned
The second time had we not lingered thus.

Jacob. Since it must be, then, do ye this, my sons,—
Take of the best fruits in the land with you
A present to the man,—a little balm,
Honey and spices, almonds, nuts, and myrrh,
Also the money which unknown ye found
In your sacks' mouths. Perhaps an oversight
It was,—oh that it was!—and also take
Benjamin with you, and arise and go
Again unto the man. And may the Lord
So give you favour in his sight that he
Will send both Benjamin and Simeon back.

Benjamin. The Almighty will defend and bring us home
In peace and joy.

Voices. Amen ! amen !

Jacob. Amen !

Amen !

(They set out at once.)

(Jacob gazes after them till they are out of sight.)

Jacob (to himself). Gone from my sight ! Ah ! all around
is dark !

The great man called them spies—took them for spies.

He may have drawn them back to have them all

Within his power. Nay, does even Simeon live ?

And now his hand is on poor Benjamin.

O Egypt, bitter land to me and mine !

Art thou the land where Abraham's seed shall be

Oppressed, afflicted ? Yet in thee is food

That we do perish not. I cannot see

Out of the cloud. Oh, God ! I look to thee.

Scorn not my flickering faith. Will they return ?

O bring them back to me. Thou merciful

And gracious art. Thou didst deliver me.

Oh shield them when they come again before

The Ruler of the land. Turn thou his heart

To favour them when he sees Benjamin

Standing before him. Him he sought to see.

*(Pauses, greatly moved. Wives and sons'
wives draw gently near to comfort him.)*

Jacob. My wives and daughters, cease. Speak not—
speak not.

To comfort Jacob is to break his heart.
I part not with my grief. It is the hand,
Sore bruised and crushed, that holds up in the light
Of memory of love my treasures lost.
There is a grief one's own, sacred from reach
Of human ken. Oh ye are kind—but go,
Shed your own tears. My sorrows cut me off
From your relief. Show me the kindness of
Seeming neglect to-day—none coming near.
I would be all alone—alone !

(They withdraw.)

SCENE X.—Egypt. The Royal City.

CROWDS IN THE STREETS. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN ARRIVE.

Levi. Crowds in the streets, we may not further go.
What means this stir ?

Asher. Hark to the shouts they raise,
I think I know the words.

Issachar. What do they say ?
Words of rejoicing, plainly.

Asher. "Bow the knee !"

All. They bow. Some great man comes. Behold !
behold !

The Royal chariot. Let us also bow !

Levi. It is the man—the Ruler of the land
Himself. Look ! look ! His eye hath fallen on us.

Benjamin. Is that the great man looking straight at us ?
He will be kind. I see it in his face,—
I feel it. Simeon is safe. Fear not.
He'll not refuse us corn.

Reuben. Let us go on,
The press is slackening.

Judah. Yea, at once go on
And seek that we may see the Governor.

We know the stores,—he will perhaps be there.

Issachar. May God Almighty turn his heart to us
Now Benjamin is with us, and he finds
Our words are true !

SCENE XI.—Before the Storehouses.

INTERPRETER, STEWARD, AND OTHERS.

THE ELEVEN BRETHREN ARRIVE.

Judah. Behold the Interpreter. Reuben, speak thou,
Or Levi, to the man, that he make known
Our coming to the Viceroy.

Levi. It is known
Already,—there the Steward comes.

Steward. My lord
Knows ye are come, and now hath given command
That ye dine with him even to-day at noon,
Follow ye me. The hour is near. Ye must
Somewhat prepare. The asses will be fed,
Leave them with these. (*To himself.*)

I see that they have brought

Their youngest brother with them. All is well.
They'll get back Simeon. I have taken to him
As to a brother. Many a good long look
The Viceroy took at Simeon in the court,
Though Simeon saw him not.

The Brethren (among themselves). What can this mean,
To dine with him at noon? We cannot tell
His end in this. We have no time to weigh

The thing even roughly. We are in his hands
And must obey. Perhaps it is to catch
Us in our talk, making us feel at ease,
That we may openly speak. We need not fear,
We speak the truth, we have no lies to hide,
So memory shall not be upon the stretch
Framing a tale. Yet let us careful be
Lest ill be set for us.

Benjamin. Good you will find,
Else all that I have seen as yet is false.

Levi. A great man's kindness ! Ah, the hand of power
Longs to bring all things under ! We are weak,
And he can sport with us. You may be right.
But let us set a watch upon our lips
Before the man.

*(They follow the Steward, but halt
before entering, to speak to him.)*

Steward. My lord gave the command,
Why so afraid ?

Issachar. How looked he when he gave
The order to thee ?

Steward. Tush ! Believe my word,
Ye have no cause to fear.

Levi. Is Simeon safe ?

Steward. And well,—you soon shall see.
(He is going away, but Reuben detains him.)

Reuben. Hear me. O, sir !

We came before, thou knowest, to buy food,
But on our homeward journey,—at the inn
Halting to bait, one opened his sack, and lo !
He found his money lying in full weight.
We cannot tell. We know not of the thing.
And, home returned, we each his money found
In his sack's mouth. How came the money there
We do not know. But our first money we
Have brought again, and other money have
We in our hands wherewith to buy. Who put
The money in our sacks we cannot tell.

Steward. Your God has given you treasure in your sacks.
I had your money. Wait !

(Brings out Simeon to them.)

All. God's name be praised ! Surely the man is good,
You are given back to us !

(Embracing Simeon.)

Simeon. All here ! all here !
And Benjamin ! Oh God ! my prayer is heard !
Tell me of all at home.

Voices. All is well there,
Our father well,—our wives and little ones.

Simeon (holding Benjamin). And Benjamin is come with
you ! Ah, now
Our words are proved ! We'll guard thee, Benjamin,
Take care of thee !

Benjamin. Why should my father fear?
I'm with my brothers.

Simeon (aside). Ah, Joseph was with us
That day in Dothan's field

Steward. Ye must come on,
The hour is nigh.

Benjamin (cheering them). Why, Simeon is restored,
Our candle shines more brightly at each step !

Reuben (perplexedly). We follow thee.
(*They enter the house.*)

SCENE XII.—Apartment in Joseph's Official Residence.

JOSEPH. HIS BRETHREN BROUGHT IN.

THEY MAKE PROFOUND OBEISANCE.

Joseph (through Interpreter). Arise, and stand upon your feet. I see,

Well-pleased, that ye are come. Speak as ye would.

Reuben. Let my lord bend his ear. Behold we bring
A little present in our hand to thee,
Sent by our father. If my lord will deign
To accept it graciously, we'll bless my lord
For his great goodness.

Joseph. I accept the gift
From him who sent it, and from you who bring.

(*Pauses.*)

He is alive, your father,—the old man
Of whom you spake?

Reuben. Thy servant is alive
And also well.

Joseph. Your father well! Is this
(*Looking at Benjamin*)

Your youngest brother with you?

Reuben. This is he,
Our brother Benjamin, of whom we spake.
(*Benjamin bows down.*)

Joseph. The Lord be gracious unto thee, my son !
(*To himself.*)

'Tis more than I can bear ! Those wondrous dreams
My brethren bowing down, and Benjamin,
My mother's son, my one full brother, sent
By my father, who yet lives ! Oh, time
Of God's right hand of blessing ! Feelings rise
Too strong to be controlled !

(*Withdraws quickly to his chamber.*)

Steward. Did I not say
To you, fear not ? Stay ye a little here.
You will be called forthwith.

(*Steward leaves them.*)

Levi. What do you think,
Is not this strange ?

Issachar. I do not dread so much
Rough treatment as this favour of the man.
Oh, it is come upon us at the last !

Simeon. Hush ! hush !

Benjamin. Why fear where no cause is to fear ?
Truth will deny itself if all turn not
To good now happening to us. We are true,
And having hearts unburdened, we shall fail
Of justice to ourselves to seem afraid.
The man acts kindly, and I take it kind,
Let us not flee when no one does pursue !

Steward (returns). Come now, and I will place you one
by one

In presence of my lord.

Reuben (whispering to them). Let no rash word
Pass from our mouth. The past is past and gone.
We own all just. We bow unto that hand
That ruleth all. Respect and truth observed,
We will not blame ourselves on after thought
Whatever comes of this.

(They pass on to the dining-hall.)

CHORUS.

Behold the offended and the offenders are met !

The feast is spread before them,
A gleam of joy and ease lightens the penitent.
Eat, drink, and be merry, O sons of Jacob,
Come from Canaan to Egypt in the sore famine.
The cloud is thin that now hides your sun,
The eye of the great man melting with forgiveness
Pierces the cloud even now.
He sits under an open sky,
And the heart of five-fold-favoured Benjamin
Swims in love that casts out fear.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

When the feast is ended,
Even to-morrow, go on your way.
Turn your back on the Royal City—
Your face towards home.

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

But wisdom and love may ask for one terror more
To scatter uncertainty :
For Benjamin is Joseph's brother,
Joseph whom they hated and sold,
And would they indeed die for Benjamin
Or forsake him and flee ?

FULL CHORUS.

Yea,—but one terror more,—and
Then the fulness of love reached,
The floodgates of rapture will burst wide
And its waters rush forth
In astonishment, thankfulness, praise !

SCENE XIII.—The Court of Joseph's House.

THE STEWARD, INTERPRETER, AND OTHERS.

Steward. Well, these Hebrews are on their way again. They are no doubt in good spirits.

Interpreter. I cannot understand this,—taken for spies at one time, dining with the Governor at another.

Steward. We shall see what comes out of it by-and-by. The Viceroy has plans,—but, I am only steward.

Interpreter. O, I do not want to learn secrets. But there is one beckoning on you.

Servant (to Steward). You are wanted within.

Steward. I knew I would be wanted. Say you (*addressing Interpreter*) nothing to any one. We might get ourselves into trouble.

Interpreter. I will say nothing, for I have nothing to say.
(*Steward hurries in.*)

SCENE XIV.—The Open Country.

THE ELEVEN BRETHREN ON THEIR WAY HOME.

Levi. I love the open fields, the open sky,
Freedom is here—life of my steps—my tongue.
Within the walls of these great cities—fear
And treachery and pride are born and thrive.
Who there lives nobly? I could lift my hand
And strike at all I meet

Simeon. And once could I
So do, my brother. But we only knew
Pastures and flocks then, as is yet thy case.
But I have now the double knowledge gained—
The shepherd's and the citizen's. I fear
The evil that draws forth our scorn and wrath,
Jostled upon these streets, lives in our hearts
And goes with us where we soever go.

Levi. And say you that I carry such?

Simeon Not you
More than we all. Let not your anger rise.
I but declare what you had gathered up
With your own eyes had you been left with me
In Memphis 'mong these strangers. Justice sits
Upon the throne and near it in the land

Of Mizraim. Pharaoh is both wise and good.
The brow of worth is honoured by his hand,
And general joy proclaims the general heart
From envy free.

Levi. You have been quickly taught.

Simeon. Or I've learned well. Say, was not Pharaoh
wise

In taking from a dungeon, where he was
Unjustly kept, that very man who rules
Under himself ?

Reuben. The Viceroy, do you mean ?

Simeon. Yea, even he. The people call the man
"Reader of dreams !"—"Saviour of many lives !"
This famine he foretold when plenty was
And no one feared. Through him the granaries now
Are full to meet the nation's need and ours,
And others' need besides.

Dan. A marvellous tale.
But why so hard on us ?

Levi. What grounds had he ?
Life-knowledge ranging from a prison cell
To absolute power ought to have made him think
Before condemning. Spies indeed ! Oh ! oh !
What if he never meant to do us harm ?

Judah. The great God rules men's hearts. May it not be
That through him we are humbled. But, no more
Of treatment hard we speak. We joy to learn

From thy mouth, Simeon, that his hand was good
On thee detained behind.

Benjamin. My words do stand.
I said the man was kind, and will be kind.

Asher. He seemed to think of you as you of him,
Strange sympathy between strange souls indeed.
You the most honoured guest.

Levi. It pleased us all
His honouring you. He saw that we were pleased.

Simeon. Yes! yes! But, Benjamin, your blundering
Made us all smile.

Benjamin. I knew not what to do.
 Me lowest seated to receive the mess
 Greatest of all. Methought the wine did make
 My eyes to dazzle.

Gad. And the wine was good,
As crushed from grapes of Hebron it was good.

Zebulun. Benjamin lowest placed. The Steward gave
Us all our places. Did he learn from you,
Simeon, our names and ages, that he set
Us right from Reuben down?

Simeon No—not from me.
Why, nothing caused me fear when you were gone
And I in prison left—though there not long,
Not two whole days,—so much as how he showed
Knowledge of me, of us. I often felt
As if eyes lighted from above were fixed

On me and you too, though far off. They say
He secrets can reveal,—that God gives him
Wisdom direct. I know his eye could read
Me through and through.

Reuben.

Stranger all things become !

Judah. Let us not warm our wonder into fears
By idle fancying. We are on our way,
Our asses laden—Benjamin with us,
And Simeon too. Twelve days and we are home
To make all joyful there. But who comes up ?

Voices. The Steward,—horsemen with him ! Let us halt.
He waves his hand. He wishes us to halt.

(They halt, much alarmed.)

Steward (coming up). Why have ye done this thing,—
rewarding ill
For good received ? Is this not it,—the cup
Ye've ta'en in which my lord himself doth drink,
And by which he divineth,—so men say.
Ill have ye done in doing this.

Reuben (agitated).

Why saith

My lord these words ? Forbid it, God, that we
Should do according to this thing ! Behold
The money in our sacks' mouth which we found
We brought to thee again. How then,—should we
Out of my lord's house gold or silver steal ?
With whomsoever of thy servants now
It shall on search be found—both let him die,

And we will also bondmen to my lord
Become.

Steward. Even as your words then let it be.
The man with whom the cup is found shall be
My servant, but for you ye shall go on
Unblamed.

All (lifting down the sacks). Behold our sacks ! Make
search, make search !

Steward (searches from the eldest down). The money in
each sack—but not the cup.
Here is the last.

Benjamin. The cup is not in mine.

Steward. Behold the cup !

(Holding it up.)

Benjamin. In mine ! The cup in mine !
How came it there ?

Steward. The cup is found with you.

All. Ah woe the day ! Our sin hath found us out.
We cannot go. We will return with you.
Take us all back. We leave not Benjamin,
We will not leave our brother Benjamin,
We will not fight with God.

*(They rend their clothes, lade every man
his ass, and return to the city.)*

*SCENE XV.—Room in Joseph's House.**JOSEPH, alone.*

Joseph. Thy ways, O God, are marvellous. Behold
How I to-day am—how my brothers are,—
And how my father. Who could see this day
When from my home to Shechem I did go
To find my brethren—found them farther on,
And by them to the Ishmaelite was sold.
Thou might'st have smitten them in Thy righteous wrath,
Left them to perish in captivity,
Brought down with grief my father to the grave.
This might have been foreseen, but no not such
A day of joy as this. Not in man's steps
Thou walkest. Thou art God!

(Pauses.)

They are in fear,
True! but in danger truly they are not.
They deem me dead, so do their acts convince
Me of their penitence. I overheard
Their self-accusing whisperings 'mong themselves,
They thinking that mine ear from Egypt's tongue
Alone drew meaning. Simeon was bound
A pledge of their return. (I chose him out
His hand was heaviest laid on me that day.)
They left him weeping. Simeon I have proved
And he is changed. Another spirit now

Rules in that once fierce breast. My favour shown
To Benjamin at dinner, in the mess
Fivefold of theirs, sent to him from my hand,
Displeased them not, but pleased, as by their smiles
I saw. For this, O God, I thankful am,
But yet, in Thy sight moving, it hath passed
Across my mind that in my presence there
At dinner they might feel constraint and show,
Tasting the generous wine too,—surface play
Of kindly feeling in their eyes to him,
While all the time deep in their hearts might lurk
The mustard seed of envy and of hate,
(Jealous of him having his father's love
In double share that Joseph is no more),
Ready some hour to shoot up to a tree
Beneath whose deadly shade murder might creep
Red-handed and lie down. Therefore this proof
Further I make. of bringing Benjamin
Under the charge of carrying off my cup,
(Not leaving him so charged within their power
Helpless. my steward stand by lest they
Enraged should smite him) that I may behold
And see if they will leave him to his fate
And on their way to Hebron go in joy
That they are free,—and rid moreover too
Of Benjamin as of myself—no more
To mar their views. It cuts me to the heart
To pain them, but such smiting springs of love
And tendeth upward in the end;—for Thou

Even by Thy rod restor'st Thy wandering sheep !
But, hark ! I hear the Steward's voice, and there
My brethren are again.

*(His brethren enter, Benjamin in custody.
They all bow down to the ground.)*

Joseph (with effort). What deed is this ye've done ?
Have ye not heard,—
Is it not said,—that such a man as I
Can certainly divine ?

Judah. What shall we say
Unto my lord ? How shall we clear ourselves ?
God hath found out our sin. We yield. Both we
And he with whom the cup is found are now
The servants of my lord.

Joseph. Nay, God forbid
That I do so to you. The man alone
In whose hand it is found—even he alone
Shall be my servant. As for you, uncharged
With fault or crime—go, get you up in peace
Unto your father.

*(Joseph struggling against his feelings. Benjamin
about to be led out. The brethren in great con-
sternation. Judah makes obeisance and speaks.)*

Judah. Oh, my lord, let me,
Thy servant, speak a word in my lord's ear,
And let not now the anger of my lord
Burn against me, thy servant, for thou art

As Pharaoh even. My lord inquired of us
At the first time,—“Have ye a father left
At home, and yet another brother there?”—
And we did say unto my lord,—“We have
A father left—an old man—and with him
A child of his old age, a little one,¹
The only one of his own mother left,
His brother being dead, and he is much
Belovéd of his father.” And my lord
Did say unto his servants,—“Bring him down
That I may set mine eyes upon him too.”
And we did say unto my lord,—“The lad
Cannot his father leave, for if he should
Then would his father die.” And thou didst say,—
“Except your youngest brother come with you
Ye shall not see my face again.” And so
It came to pass when we thy servants came
Unto our father—that we told him all
My lord had spoken. And our father said,
Whenas our stores were low,—“Go ye again
Buy us a little food.” And we did say,—
“We cannot go,—but if he go with us,
Benjamin, also,—we will then go down,
Because we may not see the man’s face more
If we bring not our youngest brother down
Along with us.” To this thy servant even,
Our father, said,—“Ye know that Rachel bare
Two sons to me, and that the one went out
From me and came not back, and I did say

As ye the sad proofs showed to me,—alas !
Surely my Joseph is in pieces torn,
And since that day I have not Joseph seen,
And if ye also take this one from me
And mischief happen to him ye shall bring
My gray hairs down with sorrow to the grave.”
Now therefore when I to thy servant come
And lo ! the lad is not brought back with me,
Seeing that in the lad’s life is bound up
Our father’s life—it then shall come to pass
When he doth see the lad is not with us
That he shall die, and we thy servants here
Shall bring our father’s gray hairs to the grave
With sorrow down. Yea, let me speak once more,
Thy servant whom thou hearest did become
Surety unto my father for the lad,
This saying,—“ If I bring him not again
Unto thee safe then I shall bear the blame
For ever.” Therefore now I pray my lord
Let me, thy servant, for the lad become
A bondman to my lord, and let the lad
Go with his brethren home. For how shall I
Go up unto my father, and the lad
Not with us—lest I preadventure see
The evil that shall on thy servant come.

*(Joseph, unable longer to restrain himself,
bids his servants retire. When left alone
with his brethren, he speaks to them in
Hebrew, weeping aloud.)*

Joseph. Do ye not know your brother Joseph—me
Your very brother Joseph? I am he.
Say,—is my father yet alive?

*(Falters and pauses, through emotion. His
brethren answer not from perfect astonish-
ment, mingled with slight fear.)*

Come near

To me, I pray you, your own brother whom
Ye sold that day. But grieve ye not—nor yet
Be angry with yourselves,—for God sent me
Before you to preserve many alive,
Yea, to preserve you a posterity
Upon the earth. Not you, but God Himself
Did send me hither,—who hath also made
Me even a father unto Pharaoh and
Lord of his house—Ruler throughout the land.

*(His brethren still unable to
answer, Joseph yet speaks.)*

Haste ye, go up, and to my father say,—
Thus saith thy son Joseph who yet doth live,
“God hath made me Ruler of all the land
Of Egypt,—come unto me—tarry not,
And thou shalt dwell in Goshen near me with
Thy children and their children—thou and all
Thy flocks and herds, and I will nourish thee,
For there will be five years of famine more.”

Simeon (greatly moved). Oh God, oh God, whose voice do
I now hear?

The voice of Joseph whom I wickedly
Did

Joseph. Cease—no word ! God in His mercy sent
Me into Egypt,—to be as I am
This day,—grieve not. Behold you all do see,
And Benjamin, that it is I who speak,
Your very brother Joseph.

(Embracing Benjamin.)

Benjamin,

My little brother whom I left in tears
That day beside his father Bilhah by
Calming his griefs that I would soon be back
To take him on the ass again,—and now
A man, of all his brethren beloved,
And of his father who yet lives,—O joy
Too full, too great !

(In tears.)

Benjamin (weeping). Thou art come back to me,
My Joseph. Yes,—the very face I see
That faded from my eyes that day but came
So often in my sleep to look at me,
For which I hopeless pined,—and have I lived
To see it in the flesh !

(Stops, from deep emotion.)

The Ten (weeping). God hath our shame
Turned into dancing. Joseph is alive !
Mercy of mercies ! We would but rejoice,
But ah !

Joseph. My brethren, hear me yet again,
God sent me down to Egypt to preserve
You by a great deliverance. Give thanks
To God with me. And in to-morrow's dawn
Set out for Hebron,—bring my father down,
Your wives and little ones. Lo ! chariots
And wagons I do send with you to bring
Them down. Go up in peace. I have but one
Desire left now—to see my father's face
And to be seen.

Reuben. God give our father strength
To look upon his dead son's living face
And not expire for joy !

CHORUS.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

The transgressors are forgiven,
All their iniquity pardoned :
Are they not blessed whose sin is pardoned,
Whose iniquity is forgiven ?

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

Blessed indeed are they :
But ah ! remorse for the injury done

To others, and even to themselves,
To the innocent, to the confiding,
To body, to soul, to spirit,
And that, despite divine goodness
Surrounding them, possessing them,
Day by day—hour by hour—
Must abide in the breast for ever,
Filling them with sorrow and with shame.
At the stream of pardon and forgiveness
The cup of perfect peace is not filled.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

But did not Joseph say,—
“As for you—ye meant evil to me,
But God meant it for good :
Grieve not therefore, nor
Be angry with yourselves
For what ye did to me :
God sent me, through you,
Down into the land of Egypt
For an all-wise—for a gracious end.”

2ND SEMI-CHORUS.

True ! true ! But their wickedness successful,
Their savage wishes ripened to the fruit,

Grace had been frustrated,
Evil had triumphed :
Surely this view will give pain
The keener, the sharper,
The more they taste unmerited mercy,
The more they think of the forbearance of God.

1ST SEMI-CHORUS.

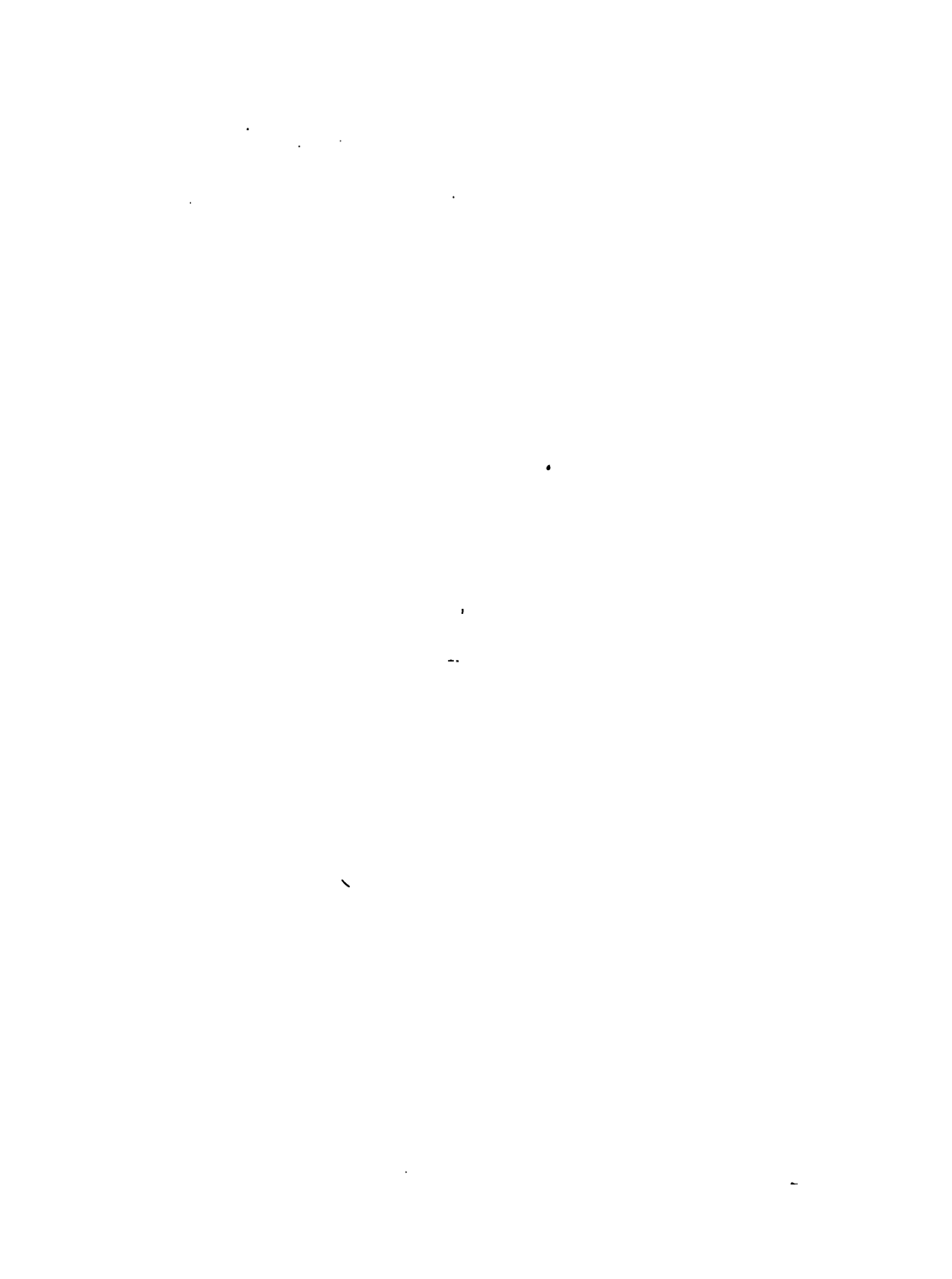
These thoughts are yours,
God's thoughts are not yours :
Listen to the Spirit of Truth
And let the ear of faith rejoice,—
“ Sin over-ruled for good
To the injured and even to the injurer
Shall be had, as sin, in everlasting remembrance.
But not to sting the pardoned,
Not to cloud the renewed,
But, wonder of wonders !
Only to land him fully in heaven,
To give him to know good and evil,
And in the knowledge thereof cry—
‘ All is well ! ’ ”

FULL CHORUS—KNEELING.

Jehovah ! Lord God Almighty,
We lie low in the dust before Thee,

Our spirits bowed, but filled with praise.
Because Thou turnest the curse into a blessing,
Bringest good out of evil,
Making all being tend to Thyself,
The Alone-Good.
There is none good but One,
Even God.
Hallelujah!!!

THE END.



3 2044 014 269

WIDENER
BOOK DUE

~~SEP 10 10~~

~~SEP 10 10~~

~~JUL 22 6~~

WIDENER
BOOK DUE

RECEIVED 1992

